

Assyrian downfall through Isaiah's eyes (2 Kings 15–23): the historiography of representation

In this article I will investigate the interpretation of the Assyrian collapse in 2 Kgs 15–23. Comparing Assyrian expansion as presented in the Bible with that presented in the Assyrian sources, I will point out the problems in the biblical presentation of historical events. Combining these problems with the results of source-criticism I will argue that the “distortion” of the historical events as well as the combination of textual sources dated to different historical periods was intentional. The writers probably did it to offer their interpretation of the collapse of the Assyrian Empire. Such a presentation and organization of the events can be explained in terms of the historiography of representation. By applying this historiographical concept to chapters 2 Kgs 15–23 it is possible to elucidate several textual and historical problems.

I. The territorial expansion of Assyria in 2 Kgs

The first passage in 2 Kgs mentioning Assyria describes the campaign of Pul (Tiglath-pileser III). The text reports that Menahem, the king of Israel, paid 1,000 talents of silver to Assyria “so that he (Pul) might help him (Menahem) confirm his hold on the royal power” (2 Kgs 15,19). We also learn that Menahem raised this money by taxing all the wealthy (2 Kgs 15,20).

The second passage mentioning Assyria describes Tiglath-pileser's invasion (2 Kgs 15,29). This invasion affected, according to the Bible, mainly northern Israel and it resulted in the destruction of several cities as well as in the first deportation.

The third passage describes the same invasion of Tiglath-pileser (III) but from the southern point of view (2 Kgs 16,7-10). Achaz, exposed to the raids from Israel and Syria, asked Tiglath-pileser for help, and he, according to the Bible, came to Judah's aid. The Assyrian invasion had disastrous consequences for the rebels: Damascus was destroyed, its king Resin was executed and its inhabitants were deported. Judah paid a שחד, bribe⁽¹⁾, to Tiglath-pileser, but its territory and inhabitants were not affected by this invasion.

⁽¹⁾ M. COGAN and H. TADMOR, *II Kings*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 11; Garden City, N.Y. 1988) 188.

The fourth passage describes Shalmaneser's campaign (2 Kgs 17). Shalmaneser (V) punished Hoshea's rebellion and according to the Bible this Assyrian campaign marked the end of the Northern Kingdom. Its inhabitants were deported and new settlers were brought in to repopulate the devastated land (the second deportation).

The fifth and the longest account of the Assyrian invasion (2 Kgs 18–20) describes Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah. This Assyrian invasion started with the destruction of all the cities of Judah (2 Kgs 18,13), however, it ended in a fiasco when the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night. Sennacherib then returned to Nineveh and was assassinated (2 Kgs 19,35–37).

The sixth passage mentioning the Assyrians in 2 Kgs is a concise note placed at the end of the passage describing Hezekiah's illness (2 Kgs 20,6). Isaiah predicts the liberation of Jerusalem from the hands of the Assyrian king.

Chapter 21, describing the reign of Hezekiah's successors Manasseh and Amon, does not mention the Assyrians at all.

The last passage mentioning the Assyrians is 2 Kgs 23,29. A new power took the place of Assyria and the term אַשּׁוּר (Assyria) is used as an explanatory note providing the historical background to Josiah's death.

Following the progress of Assyrian expansion through the eyes of the biblical writers, we can clearly determine the beginning, the climax and the decline of Assyrian expansion: the beginning of Assyrian expansion can be associated with Tiglath-pileser's first campaign against the Levant (743–738 B.C.) and its climax with Shalmaneser's and Sennacherib's campaigns (the last two decades of the 8th c. B.C.). According to the Bible Assyrian expansion comes to an abrupt end during Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, and after Sennacherib's death (681 B.C.) Assyria practically disappears from the political scene of the Levant.

II. The territorial expansion of Assyria in extrabiblical sources

Numerous Neo-Assyrian documents and excavations conducted in Israel allow a partial reconstruction of the events described in the previous paragraphs⁽²⁾.

⁽²⁾ It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the problems of Assyrian campaigns or to present an exhaustive bibliography. For practical reasons I will present only an overall picture of Assyrian expansion and references to Assyrian sources will be limited to those in *ARAB*, unless otherwise required.

The Neo-Assyrian expansion towards the west started one century earlier than the Bible claims. The first real encounter between Assyria and Israel, not mentioned in the Bible, took place during the reign of Shalmaneser III (ARAB I.610-611). The Israelite troops led by Achab took part in the battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.). Then we learn from the Assyrian sources that Achab's successor Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser III in 841 B.C. (ARAB I.672). The campaigns of Adad-nirari III's reign are not mentioned in the Bible at all (ARAB I.739-740)⁽³⁾.

The second major encounter with the Assyrians described in 2 Kgs 15,19-21 as the campaign of Pul can be identified with Phase I of Tiglath-pileser III's campaigns against Syria (743-738 B.C.). This series of campaigns resulted in establishing Neo-Assyrian provinces in northern Syria. The rest of the local kings recognized Assyrian sovereignty by paying tribute, Israel included (ARAB I.769-771)⁽⁴⁾.

A later encounter with the Assyrians described in 2 Kgs 15,29 and 16,7-10 corresponds to three campaigns of Tiglath-pileser III conducted against the Levant in 734-732 B.C. These campaigns resulted in turning Damascus into a new Assyrian province and in the confirmation of the pro-Assyrian king Hoshea on the throne in Samaria. Judah by paying tribute managed to maintain a certain level of independence (ARAB I.776-779, 815-819)⁽⁵⁾.

The biblical description of the end of the Northern kingdom most likely telescopes two Assyrian campaigns into one narrative. According to the Assyrian sources the first campaign was led by Shalmaneser V (Babylonian Chronicle I i:28) and the second was led by Sargon II (ARAB II.4-5, 17, 55, 80, 92, 99, 133-135). These campaigns marked the end of the Israelite kingdom and Samaria became the capital of a new Assyrian province, *Sāmerīna*. Judah once again managed to maintain its independence⁽⁶⁾. A further campaign led

⁽³⁾ R.E. TAPPY, *The Archaeology of Israelite Samaria* (HSS 50; Atlanta, GA. 1992) II, 506-611.

⁽⁴⁾ I. EPHAL, "The Assyrian Domination of Palestine", *WHJP* (1979) 276-289; H. TADMOR, *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, King of Assyria*. Critical Edition, with Introduction, Translations and Commentary (Jerusalem 1994) 276.

⁽⁵⁾ P. DUBOVSKÝ, "Tiglath-Pileser III's Campaigns in 734-732 B.C.: Historical Background of Isa 7, 2 Kgs 15-16 and 2 Chr 27-28", *Bib* 87 (2006) 153-170.

⁽⁶⁾ B. BECKING, *The Fall of Samaria*. An Historical and Archaeological Summary (Leiden 1992) 47-60.

by Sargon II against the Levant (*ARAB* II.30) is not mentioned in 2 Kgs⁽⁷⁾.

The last Assyrian campaign, described in 2 Kgs 18–20, can be identified with Sennacherib's invasion in 701 B.C. The written sources and archaeological excavations confirm the destruction of several Judean cities and the Assyrians admit that Jerusalem was not captured (*ARAB* II.239–240, 309–312)⁽⁸⁾. However, the result of the campaign was satisfactory enough for Sennacherib to turn his attention towards the east. He captured Babylon and conquered part of Elam. These grandiose victories help the Assyrians to get a steadfast foothold in the east (*ARAB* II.241–254).

The campaigns of Sennacherib's successor Esarhaddon are not mentioned in the Bible. He captured the city of Arzani "on the brook of Egypt" in 679 B.C., organized a punitive campaign to quell the upheaval led by the king of Sidon in 675 B.C. (*ARAB* II.511–512, 527), and settle the problems with the Arabs (*ARAB* II.518). His expansion reached its climax when he conquered Egypt in 671 B.C. marching through Philistia (*ARAB* II.580–581). Ashurbanipal continued the expansionist policy of his father Esarhaddon, however, his campaigns are not mentioned in the Bible either. He managed to eliminate the last nests of Egyptian resistance and thus Assyrian control extended from Elam to Egypt (*ARAB* II.875)⁽⁹⁾. During this period Judah was for most of the time a loyal vassal paying tribute and complying with the Assyrian demands⁽¹⁰⁾. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated Assyrian presence in Israel in the form of typical Assyrian buildings, fortresses, pottery and other artifacts that suggest strong Assyrian control over Judah⁽¹¹⁾. The Assyrian empire started declining at the end

(7) J.J.M. ROBERTS, "Egypt, Assyria, Isaiah, and the Ashdod Affair: An Alternative Proposal", *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* (ed. A.E. KILLEBREW) (Atlanta, GA 2003) 265–283.

(8) L.L. GRABBE, "*Like a Bird in a Cage*". The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. (London – New York 2003) 2–43.

(9) Assyrian control over Egypt did not last too long. In 653 B.C. the Assyrians had already been expelled from Egypt.

(10) According to 2 Chr 33,10–13 Manasseh was deported by the captains of the Assyrian army to Babylon; see S. JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles. A Commentary* (London 1993) 1000–1004.

(11) For a short summary see E. STERN – A. MAZAR, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible. The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods, 732–332 BCE* (New York 2001) II, 14–57.

of Ashurbanipal's reign⁽¹²⁾ and in 612 B.C. the Babylonians and Medes invaded Niniveh.

III. Distorted picture?

Comparing the events reconstructed on the basis of the Neo-Assyrian sources with the narrative of 2 Kgs, we can identify the work of Judahite scribes in the biblical account. The narrative of 2 Kgs skips the first and the last periods of Assyrian expansion, which indicates the biblical writers were not interested in presenting the comprehensive picture of Assyrian expansion, but presented Assyria only when it intervened in the political and religious development of Israel and Judah⁽¹³⁾. Furthermore, a detailed reconstruction of the political history of Assyria and Israel shows that there are problems not only in the presentation of some details⁽¹⁴⁾, but also that the larger picture of Assyrian expansion as presented in 2 Kgs is problematic. According to the Assyrian sources Sennacherib's unsuccessful attack on Jerusalem did not mark the end of Neo-Assyrian expansion. On the contrary, Assyrian territorial expansion reached its climax only during the 7th c. B.C., i.e. after the campaign in 701 B.C. At the time when the biblical account suggests that the Assyrians disappeared from the political scene, the Assyrians in fact were the rulers of the entire ancient Near East, Judah included. The decline of the Assyrian Empire started some decades later and Judah played no role in it. Thus, we can rightly ask a question: Why did the authors of 2 Kgs "distort" the historical picture?

The answer to this question can be found in theological comments with which the biblical writers encoded their way of reading history.

The first three passages (2 Kgs 15,17-21.27-31; 16,1-9) contain no theological comment except the note that the kings did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Kgs 15,18.28; 16,2). The Assyrians are presented as a real political power able to support loyal kings or to punish their disloyalty. However, such support was not offered for free (2 Kgs 15,19-20; 16,8).

⁽¹²⁾ J. PEČÍRKOVÁ, "Assurbanipal and the Downfall of the Empire", *ArOr* 64 (1996) 157-162.

⁽¹³⁾ P. MACHINIST, "The Fall of Assyria in Comparative Ancient Perspective", *Assyria* 1995. Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project Helsinki, September 7-11, 1995 (ed. R.M. WHITING) (Helsinki 1997) 179-195.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Such as telescoping Shalmaneser's and Sargon's conquest of Samaria into one account or the question of Pharaoh Tirhaqah in 2 Kgs 19,8.

The description of the invasion of Shalmaneser V contains several clues to the biblical reading of history. First, Hoshea did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Kgs 17,2). Second, the Assyrian invasion was not a capricious destruction of the weaker by the stronger, but rather a response to Hoshea's violation of the treaty with Assyria (2 Kgs 17,3-6). Third, a lengthy theological comment points out the real cause of the destruction. The Israelites sinned against their God, did not listen to their prophets, followed other gods, and committed all kinds of abominations (2 Kgs 17,7-23). Thus the end of the Northern kingdom is explained as a natural consequence of Israelite sins. This idea is reaffirmed in 2 Kgs 18,12.

These theological comments lead us to the following conclusions. According to the Bible, starting with Tiglath-pileser III Assyria became an important political player on the stage of world history. However, the Assyrians conformed to clear rules. They required loyalty from their vassals and punished adequately any violation of a treaty with them. On the other hand, the Assyrians were also loyal to their loyal vassals and willing to save them, if they were under attack⁽¹⁵⁾. The Assyrian support of local kings, however, was not a disinterested matter, but it was given in exchange for a substantial payment. Finally, the extensive theological comment following the fall of Samaria makes it clear that the Assyrian intervention was part of God's plan to punish the Israelites' sins. Since all the kings during whose reign the Assyrians intervened did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, the Assyrians can be understood as a punitive instrument, hired by God to carry out God's mission in recompense for the payment received.

The last encounter with the Assyrians described in 2 Kgs 18–19 presents a different scenario. In contrast to chapter 17, this passage does not contain a theological discussion explaining the defeat of the Assyrian troops. In order to bring to light the interpretative clues contained in these chapters it will be necessary to start with a short literary analysis. Chapter 18 opens with an introductory regnal résumé (2 Kgs 18,1-8)⁽¹⁶⁾. This narrative introduction incorporates a short historical report, which is illustrated by the verse "he (Hezekiah) did

⁽¹⁵⁾ See for example SAA XV 116.

⁽¹⁶⁾ B.O. LONG, *2 Kings* (FOTL 10; Grand Rapids, MI 1991) 193-246. For propaganda speech and letter-address genres, see E. BEN-ZVI, "Who Wrote the Speech of Rabshakeh and When?", *JBL* 109 (1990) 72-92; P. MACHINIST, "The Rabshakeh at the Wall of Jerusalem: Israelite Identity in the Face of the Assyrian 'Other'", *Hebrew Studies* 41 (2000) 79-92.

what was right in the sight of the Lord" (2 Kgs 18,3). 2 Kgs 18,9-12 summarize chapter 17 and the narrative continues with another annalistic section reporting Sennacherib's invasion and Hezekiah's submission (2 Kgs 18,13-16). The syntax of 2 Kgs 18,1-16 is simple. The narration is developed by means of waw-consecutive forms and the number of heroes is kept as low as possible. The style abruptly changes in 2 Kgs 18,17. Six new heroes — three representatives of Judah and three representatives of Assyria — appear on the scene (2 Kgs 18,17). Moreover, the Jerusalemites sitting on the city walls appear in 2 Kgs 18,26-27 as well as the prophet Isaiah 2 Kgs 19,2. The rhetoric changes as well. The dry annalistic style of 2 Kgs 18,1-16 gives place to a sophisticated rhetoric full of direct discourses, prayers, and prophecies in 2 Kgs 18,17-19,31. Numerous rhetorical figures⁽¹⁷⁾ draw the readers into the plot and make them experience the plight of the Jerusalemites under Assyrian siege. Scholars generally agree⁽¹⁸⁾ that the change of style in 2 Kgs 18,17 is the result of the combination of different sources, A (annalistic) and B (discursive)⁽¹⁹⁾. By doing this, the biblical writers gave Hezekiah's encounter with Sennacherib weight that cannot be justified from extrabiblical sources.

The meaning of this biblical emphasis should be seen in the context of the rules characterizing Assyrian control of the subjugated kingdoms⁽²⁰⁾ — the Assyrians rewarded loyal kings and punished disloyal ones. According to these rules Hezekiah's rebellion against Assyria rightly triggered the Assyrian punitive campaign. Hezekiah, seeing the destruction of Judah, recognized "his sin" and paid the tribute (2 Kgs 18,13-16). Following the rules of Assyrian international policy, Hezekiah's tribute should have been sufficient to pay off his sin (cf. 2 Kgs 15,20). However, Sennacherib after having accepted Hezekiah's tribute did not return to Assyria as one could expect but

⁽¹⁷⁾ P. DUBOVSKÝ, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*. Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and Its Significance for 2 Kings 18-19 (BibOr 49; Rome 2006) 10-26.

⁽¹⁸⁾ For a review of present scholarly opinions see MACHINIST, "The Rab šaqeh", 154.

⁽¹⁹⁾ COGAN, *II Kings*, 242-244. The best example suggesting that the combination of sources A and B into one account was intentional is the use of the geographical term Lachish. Hezekiah sent his messengers to Lachish to negotiate the conditions of his surrender (18,14) and Sennacherib sent his messengers from Lachish to negotiate the surrender of Jerusalem (18,17). See also the verb שָׁב used in both sources (A: 18,14; B: 19,7.33.36).

⁽²⁰⁾ M. COGAN, "Judah under Assyrian Hegemony: A Reexamination of Imperialism and Religion", *JBL* 112 (1993) 404-414.

launched an attack against Jerusalem⁽²¹⁾. This shift in Assyrian international policy indicates that the stumbling block, which according to the Bible ultimately caused the fall of Assyria, is hidden in 2 Kgs 18–19. Thus, the following literary analysis of these chapters will reveal the core of the biblical interpretation of the Assyrian downfall.

IV. Same phenomena, different interpretations

The gradual crescendo of rhetoric in 2 Kgs 15–23 reaches its climax in Isaiah's taunt song (2 Kgs 19,21–28). This unique piece of poetry in 2 Kgs is constructed in the form of a dialogue with Sennacherib:

19,21–23a: 3. pers. sing./1. pers. sing. ⁽²²⁾ — 2. pers. sing. (subject: the daughter of Jerusalem) (Sennacherib)	
19,23b–24:	— 1. pers. sing. — 3. pers. sing. (subject: Sennacherib) (nation)
19,25: 1. pers. sing. (subject: God)	— 2. pers. sing. (Sennacherib)
19,26:	— 3. pers. pl. (nation)
19,27–28: 1. pers. sing. (subject: God)	— 2. pers. sing. (Sennacherib)

This song conveys four interpretations of the territorial expansion of Assyria: the interpretation given by the Assyrians, the affected nations, the daughter of Jerusalem (Isaiah), and God.

The Assyrian interpretation: Sennacherib's words (2 Kgs 19,23b–24) convey the winner's point of view. By means of 1. p. s. the author focuses on Sennacherib's reading of the events (internal focalization)⁽²³⁾. The latter interprets the invasion of Judah in the context of Assyrian victorious campaigns. His list of successes markedly reflects the rhetoric of the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions. The Assyrians conquered inaccessible mountain regions (אֲנִי עָלִיתִי מְרוֹם הָרִים)⁽²⁴⁾,

⁽²¹⁾ Such a procedure has not been attested in the Neo-Assyrian sources; see DUBOVSKÝ, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 130.

⁽²²⁾ Verses 21–23 use 3. p. (extradiegetic and heterodiegetic form of narration) except verse 23, which in the MT contains the suffix of 1. p. s. This might indicate that the subject (3. p. s.) and suffix (1. p. s.) are identical.

⁽²³⁾ J.L. SKA, "Our Fathers Have Told Us". Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives (SubBib 13; Roma 1990) 66.

⁽²⁴⁾ The conquest of mountainous regions represented an achievement that

they overcame insurmountable problems posed by enemy defense (ואחרב בכף פעמי כל יארי מצור)⁽²⁵⁾, and used or destroyed the enemy's resources (ARAB II.32)⁽²⁶⁾. In this perspective the Assyrians are the conquerors of the world; their troops penetrated into even the most remote and inaccessible parts of the world (ARAB II.23, 25). No one could stop their expansion. The list of Assyrian heroic deeds starts with ברכב רכבי (2 Kgs 19,23b)⁽²⁷⁾ indicating that Sennacherib attributes the success to Assyrian military power.

The victims' interpretation: The victims of Assyrian campaigns are described in the taunt song as an object in 3. pers. sing. The lowly

often received a special place in the Neo-Assyrian records. The best known is Sargon II's 8th campaign against Urartu; for details and bibliography see F. THUREAU-DANGIN, *Une Relation de la Huitième Campagne de Sargon* (714 Av. J.-C.) (Paris 1912); G.W. VERA CHAMAZA, "Der VIII. Feldzug Sargons II. Eine Untersuchung zur Politik und historischer Geographie des späten 8. Jhs. v. Chr. (I)", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 27 (1994) 91-118; idem, "Der VIII. Feldzug Sargons II. Eine Untersuchung zur Politik und historischer Geographie des späten 8. Jhs. v. Chr. (II)", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 28 (1996) 235-257.

⁽²⁵⁾ Most exegetes prefer to translate the expression כל יארי מצור (19,24) as "all the rivers of Egypt" even though it does not fit into the entire picture of the taunt song; for discussion see H. TAWIL, "The Historicity of 2 Kings 19:24 (= Isaiah 37:15): The Problem of 'יארי מצור'", *JNES* 41 (1982) 195-206. However, this expression can also be taken as an allusion to sophisticated strategies employed by the Assyrians in order to overcome enemy resistance (trans. "all the rivers of the fortress"). Here are two examples of Assyrians overcoming water-based defenses. In 710 B.C. in his campaign against Babylon Sargon II blocked the Tubliash River, on which the Arameans depended for their food supply, and starved the rebellious tribes out of the territory that was inaccessible to the Assyrian army; A. FUCHS, *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad* (Göttingen 1994) 146-147. The other example comes from the end of the same campaign. While attacking Merodach-Baladan, Sargon II had to face an insurmountable difficulty. Merodach-Baladan had prepared his capital for the decisive battle by digging a moat 100 m wide and 9 m deep, and flooding the area with waters diverted from the Euphrates in order to prevent Sargon II from using his chariotry and cavalry. Sargon II built a ramp across the swamps and burned down the city; see M.A. POWELL, "Merodach-Baladan at Dur-Jakin: A Note on the Defense of Babylonian Cities", *JCS* 34 (1982) 59-61.

⁽²⁶⁾ For the destruction of trees see S.W. COLE, "The Destruction of Orchards in Assyrian Warfare", *Assyria* 1995. Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, Helsinki, September 7-11, 1995 (Helsinki 1997) 29-40.

⁽²⁷⁾ This expression is usually emended ברב רכבי, trans. "in the multitude of my chariots" following the LXX versions; COGAN, *II Kings*, 226. However, it can also be translated as "when/while riding my chariot".

status of the victims in this poem is also underlined by the fact that they are never allowed to speak up in this song. They cannot resist Assyrian might, they tremble, and are ashamed. The author describes their helpless situation by means of powerful metaphors comparing the nations to the plants of the field and grass on the housetops blighted before it has grown (2 Kgs 19,26).

God's interpretation: The next subject of the dialogue with Sennacherib is God. God interprets Assyrian behavior in the taunt song twice: once in the form of a rhetorical question and once in the form of a statement. God's first interpretation (rhetorical question) confirms the victims' reading of the events. The destruction of the nations by the Assyrian troops is part of God's plan determined a long time ago. According to this interpretation the nations stand helpless before the Assyrian destroyers because God has so decided (2 Kgs 19,25). God's second interpretation (statement) corrects the Assyrian reading of the events. God claims his suzerainty over history, including that of Assyria. Because the Assyrians overstepped the boundaries, their withdrawal from Judah is interpreted as a corrective measure taken by the Lord of history to rein in the boastful invaders (2 Kgs 19,27-28).

Judah's (Isaiah's) interpretation: The taunt song depicts Judah as a nation that stands out among the humiliated nations. She is called "the daughter of Jerusalem" (2 Kgs 19,21) who not only is not scared but also dares to mock the Assyrians. This part of the taunt song (2 Kgs 19,21-23) interprets Assyrian behavior as an act of blasphemy. The accusation directed against Assyria starts with verb חָרַף in piel (2 Kgs 19,22) meaning "to taunt". Hezekiah also uses the same verb to interpret Assyrian behavior (2 Kgs 19,4,16). Whereas Hezekiah interprets this verb as a synonym of the verb יָכַח in hifil (2 Kgs 19,4) meaning "to rebuke, to reproach", the prophet Isaiah interprets it as a synonym of the verb גָּדַף (2 Kgs 19,6,22; Ps 44,17). The introduction of the verb גָּדַף radically changes the interpretation of Assyrian behavior. The verb גָּדַף in Num 15,30-31 describes intentional crimes distinguishing it from unintentional crimes (Num 15,27-29). Thus the prophet Isaiah shifts the interpretation of Assyrian hubris from the realm of a reproach (unintentional crime) to the realm of a deliberate offence to God (intentional crime), which according to the Law must be punished by death⁽²⁸⁾. On the contrary, Hezekiah's reading of

⁽²⁸⁾ The Assyrian offence is also underlined by the verb רָם (19,22) that occurs in the same legal case discussing the deliberate sin (Nm 15,30).

Assyrian arrogance uses the verbs (יָכַח and חָרַף) that did not imply the death penalty (cf. Lev 19,17.20; Is 65,6-7).

Reading these four interpretations in the context of chapters 2 Kgs 15–23 we can reorganize them on four levels.

Level zero: Most of the victims suffered humiliation without really reflecting upon it, though not without a certain degree of resistance. The Judahite ambassadors returning dismayed after being unable to withstand Assyrian propaganda (2 Kgs 18,37) as well as the defeated and deported nations (2 Kgs 18,11; 19,12) belong to this category.

Level one: According to the Bible the Assyrians ascribe their victories to themselves and according to the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions to their gods. In both the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions (ARAB II.5, 66) and the Bible⁽²⁹⁾ the Assyrians were aware that God/god appointed them to destroy the nations and they accomplished this mission thoroughly. On this level, Assyria is understood as an instrument chosen by God to punish the rebellious nations, including Israel.

Level two: The biblical writers attribute a further interpretation to Hezekiah, the first just king during the Assyrian period. He interprets the Assyrian invasions and the destruction of the cities as a natural consequence of idolatry (2 Kgs 19,15-19). However, the siege of Jerusalem, already purified from its idolatry, remains an unanswered question. On this level, Assyrian behavior is interpreted as reproaching and rebuking God. Destroying the nations at will, the Assyrians stopped being an instrument, hired to fulfill God's will, and turn into a terrifying destroyer ruining fearful nations (2 Kgs 19,26).

Level three: Only the prophet Isaiah is able to grasp the depth of the Assyrian problem and offer hope. As an "omniscient narrator" the prophet Isaiah has access to God's understanding of the events⁽³⁰⁾ and can even grasp the inner feelings of the daughter of Jerusalem. This literary technique enables us to discover the fatal problems of Assyria. On this level, Assyria is understood as God's rival. Because the invaders attributed their success to themselves, they challenged God's suzerainty over history (2 Kgs 19,22-24). By doing this, the Assyrians turned against the one who hired them and became blasphemers whose behavior constituted a capital crime.

All the interpretations begin with the same phenomena — the

⁽²⁹⁾ The concentric structure of Isaiah's prophecy underlines the concept of the divine plan according to which the Assyrians were an instrument in God's hands, cf. J.D.W. WATTS, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Nashville, TN 2005) 42.

⁽³⁰⁾ SKA, "Our Fathers", 44-45.

overwhelming military power and territorial expansion of Assyria. Nevertheless, they differ in interpreting its causes and predicting its future. Therefore the real challenge the ancient writers had to face was not to present the generally accepted phenomena, but rather to offer a comprehensive and hope-inspiring interpretation. Given the fact that the final composition of 2 Kgs 18–19 took place after the exile⁽³¹⁾, another undeniable fact must have been taken into consideration — this power did fall. Other biblical books also gave some thought to the fall of Assyria (see Is 10,5-19; 14,24-27; 30,27-33; 31,4-5; Zeph 2,13; Mic 5,5; Nah 2-3; Zec 10,11; Am 9,7). The number of passages in the book of Isaiah indicates that the prophet Isaiah probably played a key role in understanding the reasons for the collapse of the Assyrian Empire⁽³²⁾. Therefore, the introduction of Isaiah's prophecies (2 Kgs 19,6-7.20-34) in the midst of the biblical account 2 Kgs 15–23 can be seen as a confirmation of the prophecy uttered probably in the time when no one expected that this might could ever collapse.

V. Two versions, two contexts

That Isaiah's interpretation is not only in 2 Kgs but also in the book of Isaiah (Is 36–37) suggests that a plausible interpretation of Assyrian expansion was a nagging question. Several scholars have already investigated the role of Hezekiah's story in the context of the book of Isaiah⁽³³⁾. Using a unique expression, which occurs only in Is 7,3 and

⁽³¹⁾ N. NA'AMAN, "Updating the Messages: Hezekiah's Second Prophetic Story (2 Kings 19.9b-35) and the Community of Babylonian Deportees", *"Like a Bird in a Cage"*. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE, (ed. L.L. GRABBE) (London – New York, NY 2003) 201-220; S.W. HOLLOWAY, "Harran: Cultic Geography in the Neo-Assyrian Empire and Its Implications for Sennacherib's 'Letter to Hezekiah' in 2 Kings", *The Pitcher Is Broken*. Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström (ed. L.K. HANDY) (Sheffield 1995) 276-314.

⁽³²⁾ R.E. CLEMENTS, *Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem*. A Study of the Interpretation of Prophecy in the Old Testament (JSOTSS 13; Sheffield 1980) 28-71.

⁽³³⁾ P.R. ACKROYD, "Isaiah 36-39: Structure and Function", *Von Kanaan bis Kerala*. Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. Dr. J.P.M. Van der Ploeg O.P. zur Vollendung des Siebzigsten Lebensjahres am 4. Juli 1979 (ed. J.P.M.D. PLOEG) (Kevelaer – Neukirchen – Vluyn 1982) 3-21; K.A.D. SMELIK, "Distortion of Old Testament Prophecy: The Purpose of Isaiah XXXVI and XXXVII", *Crises and Perspectives*. Studies in Ancient near Eastern Polytheism, Biblical Theology, Palestinian Archaeology and Intertestamental Literature (A. S. VAN DER WOUDE) (Leiden 1986) 70-93.

36,2 — “the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field” — the final redactors of the book of Isaiah deliberately created the links between Is 36–37 and Is 7 in order to connect Hezekiah's story with Achaz's story⁽³⁴⁾. No such link exists in 2 Kgs. However, there are several markers that allow us to connect Hezekiah's story (2 Kgs 18–20) with the fall of Samaria (2 Kgs 17)⁽³⁵⁾. First, a short passage describing the end of Samaria inserted in the middle of Hezekiah's story (2 Kgs 18,9-12) constitutes a clear indication that the writers wanted the readers to see Hezekiah's story in connection with the fall of Samaria⁽³⁶⁾. Second, Sennacherib's and Shalmaneser's invasions are directed against two capitals, Jerusalem and Samaria respectively. Third, both invasions are described in 2 Kgs not only in the annalistic style but they also offer religious interpretations of the events. Fourth, in both stories there are also the warnings to Judah: in the story of the fall of Samaria Judah is threatened with ending up like Samaria (2 Kgs 17,13.18.19) and in Hezekiah's story Isaiah predicts the end of Judah (2 Kgs 20,16-19). Thus, it stands to reason that we should read 2 Kgs 18–19 (the victory of the Lord and the fall of Sennacherib) as a parallel to 2 Kgs 17 (the victory of Assyria and the fall of Samaria). With both examples the writers illustrate the fall of an important kingdom. The kingdom of Israel fell because of its sins; the Assyrian Empire fell because of its hubris.

VI. Conclusion – the historiography of representation

To conclude let us sum up the results of the foregoing analysis.

First, I have demonstrated that the overall biblical picture of Assyrian expansion does not correspond to the picture reconstructed from the Neo-Assyrian sources. This “distortion” of the historical picture was caused by presenting the events from a specific — Judahite — point of view.

⁽³⁴⁾ C. HARDMEIER, *Prophetie im Streit vor dem Untergang Judas. Erzählkommunikative Studien zur Entstehungssituation der Jesaja- und Jeremiaerzählungen in II Reg 18-20 und Jer 37-40* (Berlin – New York 1990) 88-119.

⁽³⁵⁾ This does not mean that the story could not be connected with other biblical passages; see for example a connection with Zedekiah in E. BEN-ZVI, “Malleability and Its Limits: Sennacherib's Campaign against Judah as a Case Study”, *“Like a Bird in a Cage”: The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE*, (ed. L.L. GRABBE) (London – New York 2003) 84-85.

⁽³⁶⁾ This note is missing in the book of Isaiah.

Second, in analyzing 2 Kgs 18–19 I argued, as do scholars, that there is a change of style in 2 Kgs 18,17. This change of style is usually explained as a result of the combination of sources A and B.

Third, I suggested that this combination of sources as well as the “distortion” of the overall historical picture can be explained as a literary device employed by the biblical writers to point out the reasons for the fall of Assyria.

Fourth, after studying the context of 2 Kgs 18–19 I suggested that we should interpret the fall of Assyria in the light of the punishment inflicted upon Samaria.

Finally, by analyzing Isaiah’s taunt song, I pointed out the novelty of the prophet Isaiah’s interpretation of the Assyrian downfall. According to Isaiah’s song the real cause of the Assyrians’ downfall was their hubris. Since this hubris according to the Law required the death penalty, then it was only a question of time when it would take place. From this point of view, it really did not matter whether the fall of Assyria took place some decades later; what really mattered was to understand why it happened⁽³⁷⁾.

This model for presenting historical data emphasizes the interpretation of historical events more than the exactness of their description. Thus, the presentation of the Assyrian collapse can be seen as one type of ancient historiography. In order to capture the dynamics of this historiographic technique I suggest employing the concept representation⁽³⁸⁾.

In the historiography of representation⁽³⁹⁾ events are interpreted

⁽³⁷⁾ The mention of Isaiah’s prophecy on the liberation of Judah from the hands of Assyria, coming as it does after the murder of Sennacherib (2 Kgs 20,6), suggests that the biblical writers were aware of the fact that the ultimate fall of Assyria had not yet taken place.

⁽³⁸⁾ René Girard successfully used this concept to explain atrocities committed against the Jews in France. His study of Guillaume de Machaut’s poetry is an example of how medieval society projected upon the Jews crimes they had never committed such as incest, the profanation of hosts, the murder of children, etc. This projection then justified attacks upon Jewish communities in 14th c. A.D. According to Girard’s study a similar projection of cultural, sexual, and religious crimes upon one group became a pattern, which can be easily identified in all kinds of pogroms plaguing mankind from antiquity until the present day; R. GIRARD, *Le Bouc Émissaire* (Paris 1982) 5-35.

⁽³⁹⁾ For the theoretical discussion of this type of historiography see I.W. PROVAN, *1&2 Kings* (Sheffield 1997) 45-67; J.B. KOFOED, *Text and History. Historiography and the Study of the Biblical Text* (Winona Lake, IN 2005) 242-245.

through specific optics (focalization)⁽⁴⁰⁾ that determine the organization of the overall picture as well as the selection of data. Writers did not feel obliged to present all the historical data or to be objectively correct in presenting details; they preferred to present only the data which “represent” reality. This historiographic technique also allows telescoping⁽⁴¹⁾ several events into one story, even though they need not to be connected in reality. In our case we can see that the biblical writers telescoped into one story not only the shift in Assyrian behavior but also its result – the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. The techniques of telescoping and focalization are responsible for the organization of the entire picture in such a way that it is able to capture the causes underlying the phenomena. What really matters in this historiographic technique is why it happened and not when, where and in which order⁽⁴²⁾. I have argued that one of the goals of 2 Kgs 15–23 was to explain the real reasons for the Assyrian collapse hidden from an ordinary observer under the overwhelming rhetoric and the power of the Assyrian Empire. Thus, the optics governing the choice of the data and organization of the historical events in these chapters is the presentation of Assyrian decline.

This type of historiography, moreover, permits the combination of different sources even though they might have come from different historical periods. Several studies have proved that the text is the combination of sources A and B. Such a combination of the sources into a final text can be seen as a literary device employed to mark the shift in Assyrian expansionist policy.

Pointing out the very reasons for pogroms calls for action. The historiography of representation, thus, makes way for the process of *enimification*, in which human beings are stripped of their dignity and consequently it justifies all kinds of atrocities which the persecutors would never do otherwise⁽⁴³⁾. Along the same lines the presentation of Sennacherib as a blasphemer calls for the punishment of his hubris.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ KOFOED, *Text and History*, 238.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Cf. A. MALAMAT, *History of Biblical Israel*. Major Problems and Minor Issues (CHANE 7; Leiden – Boston 2001) 58.

⁽⁴²⁾ B. Halpern captures this aspect of ancient historiographies in terms of schematic, cultic and stylized history. It “synthesizes rather than supplants the evidence”; B. HALPERN, *The First Historians*. The Hebrew Bible and History (San Francisco, CA 1988) 227.

⁽⁴³⁾ R.W. RIEBER and J. KELLY, “Substance and Shadow: Images of the Enemy”, *The Psychology of War and Peace*. The Image of the Enemy (ed. R.W. RIEBER) (New York 1991) 3–39.

Sennacherib's behavior in this sense "represents" Assyria. Sennacherib, and in him Assyria, is charged with blasphemy against the Holy One of Israel, which provokes holy war in return⁽⁴⁴⁾. Sennacherib thus becomes an icon, in which all the Assyrian hubris is concentrated. God's intervention in 2 Kgs 19,35-37 seen through Isaiah's taunt song then turns out to be a re-establishment of justice.

On the other hand, this presentation of data leads the Judahites to reflect on their behavior and to reread their own history in the light of these events. So this historiographic technique makes it possible to insert moral considerations according to the writers' needs, in our case it is a call to conversion.

Finally, employing the historiography of representation the writers can easily insert apologetic aspects into the text in order to defend, explain or support some contested changes⁽⁴⁵⁾. In our case God saved Jerusalem because Hezekiah purified the land by removing the high places, cutting down sacred poles, and breaking down pillars and the bronze serpent (2 Kgs 18,4). Thus, this technique of historiography serves as a divine confirmation of Hezekiah's reform.

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SUMMARY

In this article I compared Assyrian expansion as presented in the Bible with that presented in the Assyrian sources. Then I pointed out the problems of the historical events presented in the Bible. Combining these problems with the results of source-criticism I argued that the biblical "distortion" of the historical events was intentional. The writers probably did it to offer their interpretation of the downfall of Assyria. This presentation and organization of the events can be explained in terms of the historiography of representation. By applying this concept it is possible to explain several textual and historical problems of these chapters.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ WATTS, *Isaiah*, 45.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ The best known cases of ancient apologies are the Assyrian royal inscriptions, which justify the usurper's conquest of the throne or some important religious changes. For a discussion of the apologetic dimensions of historiography see H. TADMOR, "Autobiographical Apology in the Royal Assyrian Literature", *History, Historiography, and Interpretation*. Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures (ed. M. WEINFELD) (Jerusalem 1983) 36-57.

Der Bruderkrieg zwischen Israel und Benjamin (Ri 20)

Während sich die meisten Kämpfe im Richterbuch gegen nichtisraelitische Stämme und Völker richten, ist es im vorletzten Kapitel des Buches anders. Nach der Schandtät in Gibeä (Ri 19,1-30) entschließen sich die Israeliten in Mizpa gemeinsam gegen den Stamm Benjamin, zu dem Gibeä gehört, vorzugehen (20,1-11). Nachdem die Auslieferung der Schuldigen verweigert worden ist (20,12-13), mustern Benjamin und Israel ihre Kämpfer (20,15-17). Die Israeliten befragen zweimal Jhwh, erhalten anscheinend eine positive Auskunft, werden aber beide Male von Benjamin geschlagen (20,18-25). Nach einer dritten Befragung führt der dritte Kampf zum Erfolg (20,26-28.29-36b). Der letzte Kampf wird allerdings noch ein zweites Mal geschildert (20,36c-47). Mit der Vernichtung der restlichen Städte Benjamins (20,48) schließt das düstere Kapitel. Umstritten ist, ob es sich um eine einheitliche Erzählung handelt⁽¹⁾ oder ob wir von unterschiedlichen Quellen⁽²⁾ oder Schichten⁽³⁾ sprechen dürfen. Hier soll zunächst der Endtext unter literarischen und theologischen Aspekten untersucht werden. Anschließend wird danach gefragt, ob sich klare Indizien ergeben, um die Frage nach der Entstehung wenigstens in groben Umrissen zu beantworten⁽⁴⁾.

(¹) So z.B. L.R. KLEIN, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges* (JSOTSS 68; Sheffield 1988) 175-211, E.J. REVELL, "The Battle with Benjamin (Judges xx 29-48) and Hebrew Narrative Techniques", *VT* 35 (1985) 417-433, und P.E. SATTERTHWAITHE, "Narrative Artistry in the Composition of Judges xx 29ff", *VT* 42 (1992) 80-89.

(²) So G.F. MOORE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges* (ICC; Edinburgh 1949) 438; K. BUDDE, *Das Buch der Richter* (KHC VII; Freiburg i. Br. 1897) 132-139; C.F. BURNEY, *The Book of Judges* (London 1920) 449-458; H. RÖSEL, "Studien zur Topographie der Kriege in den Büchern Josua und Richter II", *ZDPV* 92 (1976) 31-46; J.A. SOGGIN, *Judges* (OTL; London 1981) 293-296; A.G. AULD, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth* (Edinburgh – Philadelphia 1984) 245-247.

(³) Vgl. U. BECKER, *Richterzeit und Königtum* (BZAW 192; Berlin – New York 1990) 266-287.

(⁴) Dieser Beitrag geht auf zahlreiche gemeinsame und überaus interessante Diskussionen zurück, an denen auch Anke Eversmann, Mitarbeiterin in einem Projekt der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, teilgenommen hat.

I. Die synchrone Analyse

Die Beobachtungen zum Endtext werden sich auf die Handlung, die Perspektive des Erzählers und der handelnden Figuren sowie auf den theologischen Gehalt beschränken. Beobachtungen zu Ort und Bewegung, zu den Zeitangaben, zur Struktur und zu der Zahl der Gefallenen werden erst bei der Frage nach der Entstehung des Textes eine Rolle spielen. Sie werden zurückgestellt, um unnötige Wiederholungen zu vermeiden.

1. *Handlung und Lesererwartung*

Der dreimalige Bruderkrieg zwischen Israel und Benjamin ist eng an die Erzählung von der Schandtät in Gibeon angebunden. Der Aufruf „richtet euren Sinn darauf, berätet und redet“ (19,30e-g) führt dazu, dass sich alle Söhne Israels, das ganze Volk und alle Stämme in Mizpa versammeln (20,1-2)⁽⁵⁾. Überraschen muss die anschließende Mitteilung, dass die Benjaminiter von dem Zug der Israeliten nach Mizpa nur gehört haben (20,3a.b). Gehören sie nicht auch zu „ganz“ Israel? Weiterhin fällt auf, dass der Bericht des Leviten über das in Gibeon Geschehene mit einem Appell (20,7b) endet, der jenem am Ende des letzten Kapitels (19,30e-g) sehr ähnlich ist.

Daraufhin fasst das Volk den Beschluss, nicht mehr auseinander zu gehen (20,8), und kündigt pathetisch an: „Und jetzt! Das ist die Sache, die wir Gibeon antun werden.“ (20,9a) Damit wird die Erwartung des Lesers geweckt, dass nun die entscheidenden Maßnahmen genannt werden. Der anschließende Kontext ist aber eher ernüchternd. Die Worte *בגורל עליה* lassen noch vermuten, dass es „gegen“ eine Stadt geht und dabei das Los eine Rolle spielt⁽⁶⁾. Doch was soll durch das Los entschieden werden? Die nachfolgende Selbstaufforderung spricht davon, dass ein Zehntel der „Stämme Israels“ für die Verpflegung sorgen sollen. Bei der Auswahl könnte das Los wichtig sein. Dass diese Vorsorge der Bestrafung der schuldigen Stadt dienen soll, wird in einer Infinitivkonstruktion angefügt, die aber mindestens zwei schwierige

⁽⁵⁾ Der erste Satz in Ri 20,1a spricht nicht gerade für einen markanten Erzählanfang: *ויצא כל בני ישראל*.

⁽⁶⁾ Eine beliebte Korrektur besteht darin, gestützt auf die Septuaginta (*ἀναβησόμεθα*) eine angeblich ausgefallene Verbform *נעלה* voranzustellen. So z.B. Moore (*Judges*, 427) und R.G. BOLING, *Judges* (AB; Garden City 1975) 284. K. Budde (*Richter*, 134) denkt freilich an eine Aufforderung: „lasst uns sie nach dem Lose angreifen“ (vgl. die Peschitta).

textkritische Probleme enthält⁽⁷⁾. Warum folgt aber der vollmundigen Ankündigung (20,9a) kein entsprechender Inhalt? Es wird zwar gesagt, dass sich alle Männer Israels bei der Stadt geschlossen versammeln (20,11). Ist das aber schon als Angriff auf Gibeä zu verstehen? Ein Blick auf die Befragung Benjamins durch die "Stämme Israels" (20,12-13) zeigt, dass noch nicht entschieden ist, ob die Schuldigen ausgeliefert werden und sich damit eine militärische Auseinandersetzung vermeiden lässt. Erst nachdem die Benjaminer die Auslieferung verweigert haben, versammeln sie sich in Gibeä, um mit den "Söhnen Israels" zu kämpfen (20,14). Erzähltechnisch handelt es sich bei den letzten Äußerungen des Volkes in Mizpa (20,9a.10a) und der Befragung der Clans in Benjamin (20,12-13) um ein retardierendes Element.

Die anschließenden Musterungen erhöhen auf zweierlei Weise die Spannung. Nur auf Seiten der Benjaminer werden siebenhundert Scharfschützen erwähnt (20,16). Werden diese Männer im Kampf den Ausschlag geben (vgl. 7,5.6)?⁽⁸⁾ Auf der anderen Seite nimmt sich die Gesamtzahl der Benjaminer im Verhältnis zu den übrigen Israeliten, die 400 000 kampfbereite Männer aufstellen können, recht bescheiden aus. Wie wird der ungleiche Kampf ausgehen?

Die Israeliten beginnen jeden der drei folgenden Kämpfe mit einer Befragung Gottes bzw. Jhwhs (20,18.23.26-28). Auf die erste Frage, wer den Kampf mit den Benjaminern beginnen soll, erhält Israel eine klare Antwort: "Juda zuerst." Allerdings ist anders als am Anfang des Buches (1,1-4) im Folgenden von Juda gar nicht mehr die Rede. Fallen 22 000 Israeliten im Kampf, weil man sich nicht an die Anweisung Jhwhs gehalten hat? Auf die zweite Anfrage, ob Israel noch einmal in den Kampf mit seinem Bruder Benjamin ziehen soll, folgt eine Antwort (20,23), die Israel nicht von einem zweiten Kampf abhält, in dem 18 000 Männer fallen. Erst die dritte Anfrage fällt mit der Übergabeformel so eindeutig aus (20,28e.f), dass Leser und Hörer erwarten, bald etwas von einem Sieg Israels zu vernehmen. Es sind jedoch die Israeliten, die erste Verluste erleiden (20,31c), während die Benjaminer schon an einen neuen Triumph denken (20,32a.b). Nach schwerem Kampf (20,34a.b) verdankt Israel dem Schlag Jhwhs seinen Sieg über Benjamin (20,35).

(7) Die Infinitivkonstruktion לִבְאֵשׁ ist nach Moore (*Judges*, 427) "in the highest degree unnatural, if not grammatically impossible" und für Budde (*Richter*, 134) überhaupt "sinnlos". Dass Geba und nicht Gibeä genannt ist, verwundert. Denn es wird doch die Redewendung von 20,9a (יָעֲשֶׂה לִּבְעֵהָ) aufgegriffen.

(8) Vgl. BOLING, *Judges*, 285.

Jetzt sehen auch die verbliebenen Benjaminiter ein, dass sie geschlagen sind (20,36a.b)⁽⁹⁾. Damit könnte die Schilderung der militärischen Auseinandersetzung abgeschlossen sein.

Aber der "Mann Israels" zieht sich im Vertrauen auf den Hinterhalt noch einmal zurück (20,36c.d). Es beginnt eine erneute Darstellung des Kampfes, bei der Benjamin ebenfalls für kurze Zeit scheinbar die Oberhand gewinnt (20,39a-d), bis der aufsteigende Rauch aus der Stadt Gibeä zu einer heillosen Flucht der Benjaminiter (20,38.40-42a.45a.b) und zu hohen Verlusten unter ihnen führt (20,46-47). Ist das nicht alles schon hinlänglich bekannt? Die Erzählung schließt mit der Verwüstung der Städte Benjamins (20,48).

2. Die Perspektive Israels

Aus welcher Perspektive wird erzählt? Aus welchem Blickwinkel betrachten die handelnden Figuren die Ereignisse? Ergreifen Erzähler und Figuren für Israel oder für Benjamin Partei?

Die einleitenden Verse unterstreichen, dass "alle" Söhne Israels (20,1a), die Häupter des "ganzen" Volkes und "alle" Stämme Israels (20,2a) dem Aufruf Folge leisten, den der Levit ausgelöst hat (19,30e-g). Dass sich Israel geschlossen "wie ein Mann" versammelt, wird auch dadurch unterstrichen, dass die geläufige Formel "von Dan bis Beerscheba" um "das Land Gilead" erweitert ist. Weil es sich um eine "Versammlung des Volkes Gottes", also um eine religiöse Zusammenkunft handelt⁽¹⁰⁾, haben sich auch die Häupter des Volkes (vgl. 1 Sam 14,38; Jes 19,13) eingefunden. Es wird auch die hohe Zahl der Israeliten — 400 000 Schwertträger — jetzt schon genannt (vgl. Ri 20,17). Alle diese Angaben bilden einen wirksamen Kontrast zu der anschließenden Mitteilung, dass die Benjaminiter nur davon gehört haben, dass Israel nach Mizpa hinaufgezogen ist (20,3a.b). Dabei fällt auf, dass nicht nur die Verantwortlichen für die Schandtät in Gibeä, sondern der gesamte Stamm Benjamin in Mizpa fehlt. Will der Erzähler damit schon andeuten, dass sich Benjamin "mit Gibeä solidarisch erklärt"⁽¹¹⁾?

⁽⁹⁾ Revell ("Battle", 428) übersetzt zwar: "Benjamin saw that they (Israel) had been routed". Aber er gibt selbst zu: "Most commentators take Benjamin as the subject of *ngpw*" (ib. 431 Anm. 20). Nur R.H. O'Connell (*The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges* [VTS 63; Leiden 1996] 247 Anm. 357) folgt der These Revells.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Vgl. E. LIPÍŃSKI, "עַם 'am Volk", *ThWAT* VI, 192.

⁽¹¹⁾ H.W. HERTZBERG, *Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth* (ATD 9; Göttingen 1969) 253.

Wie beurteilt der Levit die Ereignisse in Gibe'a? Er macht nicht allein die אנשי בני-בלעל (19,22) verantwortlich, sondern die בעלי הגבעה (20,5a)⁽¹²⁾. Er erwähnt auch nicht die homosexuellen Absichten des Pöbels von Gibe'a, sondern spricht davon, dieser ihn töten wollte (20,5c). Das hat ihm bei L.R. Klein den Vorwurf einer offenkundigen Lüge eingebracht⁽¹³⁾. Es entspricht zwar der Wahrheit, dass die Männer von Gibe'a die Nebenfrau vergewaltigt haben und sie am Ende gestorben ist (20,5d.e). Aber der Levit erwähnt nicht, dass er seine Nebenfrau eigenhändig dem Pöbel übergeben hat (19,25b.c). Das Wort והמת (20,5e) verstärkt nach Ph. Tribble den Verdacht, dass der Levit seine Frau verlassen und so zu ihrem Mörder geworden ist⁽¹⁴⁾. Der Levit hat demnach die Wahrheit vor der Volksversammlung verschleiert⁽¹⁵⁾. Sieht man die Dinge so, fällt natürlich auch ein Schatten auf das Urteil des Volkes, das nicht nach Hause gehen will und bereit ist, an Gibe'a zu handeln (20,8.9a). Nach L.R. Klein hätten die Söhne Israels fragen müssen, wie es dazu kam, dass der Levit am Leben blieb, seine Nebenfrau aber nach der angetanen Gewalt gestorben ist⁽¹⁶⁾. Demnach hätte sich nicht nur der Levit, sondern auch die Volksversammlung schuldig gemacht⁽¹⁷⁾.

Können wir uns einem solchen Urteil anschließen? L.R. Klein achtet sehr genau auf Unterschiede zwischen der Schilderung des Erzählers (19,22-25) und den Aussagen des Leviten (20,4-6). Man kann auch zu dem Urteil kommen, dass der Levit seine Sache vor der Versammlung sehr gut vertreten habe⁽¹⁸⁾. Dass das Leben des Leviten

⁽¹²⁾ Vgl. AULD, *Judges*, 241, und B. WEBB, *The Book of Judges. An Integrated Reading* (JSOTSS 46; Sheffield 1987) 190-191.

⁽¹³⁾ Klein (*Triumph*, 177) nennt diese Aussage "an outright lie". Ähnlich urteilt Ph. Tribble (*Mein Gott, warum hast du mich vergessen!* Frauenschicksale im Alten Testament [Gütersloh 1995] 120): "Selbst wenn diese Auffassung des Leviten legitim ist, so verschleiern seine Worte doch die Wahrheit."

⁽¹⁴⁾ Tribble (*Gott*, 120) folgert, dass der Levit "sowohl ein Mörder als auch ein Verräter ist."

⁽¹⁵⁾ KLEIN, *Triumph*, 177: "The Levite's version of the fateful night ... has skirted the truth at best."

⁽¹⁶⁾ KLEIN, *Triumph*, 170: "That the question is never put to the Levite condemns the judge as well as the judgement." Wenig später erklärt sie nochmals in aller Deutlichkeit: "they are all, each and every man, in error" (ib. 178).

⁽¹⁷⁾ Webb (*Judges*, 192) schiebt dagegen die Schuld allein dem Leviten zu: "But what will become of Israel when its assembly can be convened and used by a person of such dubious morals as this Levite?"

⁽¹⁸⁾ AULD, *Judges*, 241: "The Levite too makes the best possible case to the gathered assembly."

in Gibeon in Gefahr war, lässt sich am Schicksal seiner Nebenfrau ablesen⁽¹⁹⁾. Seine Erklärung, dass die Frau an den Folgen der Vergewaltigung gestorben sei (20,5d.e)⁽²⁰⁾, wird vom Erzähler noch dadurch überboten, dass er von einer „ermordeten“ Frau spricht (20,4a). Wenn der Levit auf die Schuld der Bürger Gibeon und nicht nur seines Pöbels hinweist, kommt das der Sicht des Erzählers entgegen, wonach der ganze Stamm Benjamin dem Aufruf zur Volksversammlung fern geblieben ist (20,3a.b). Die Stimmen des Erzählers und des Leviten stimmen darin überein, dass die Schuld einzig und allein bei den Männern von Gibeon liege.

Die israelitischen Stämme schicken im Folgenden Boten zu Benjamin, die die Frage stellen: „Was ist das für eine Untat, die unter euch geschehen ist?“ Sie warten jedoch keine Antwort ab. Die Frage ist also rein rhetorisch gestellt. Es schließt sich sofort die Forderung nach Auslieferung der *בני-בלעל* an (20,13a). Die Benjaminer kommen aber überhaupt nicht zu Wort. Der Erzähler formuliert die Weigerung selbst und betont dabei, dass die Benjaminer nicht auf die „Stimme ihrer Brüder“ hören wollten (20,13d).

Die Benjaminer äußern sich lediglich am dritten Tag, nachdem 30 Israeliten gefallen sind (20,31c): „Sie sind vor uns geschlagen wie beim ersten Mal.“ (20,32a.b; vgl. 39d) Dadurch wird betont, dass sie sich in falscher Sicherheit wiegen. Denn die Söhne Israels enthüllen dem Leser bzw. Hörer die wahre Absicht ihres vermeintlichen Rückzugs: „Lasst uns fliehen und ihn (sc. Benjamin) von der Stadt auf die Straßen locken!“ (20,32c-e) Den Benjaminern bleibt aber die Zuversicht noch eine Weile erhalten. Auch als der Kampf mit den 10 000 Kämpfern aus Israel sehr schwer geworden ist, „erkannten sie nicht, dass das Unglück über sie gekommen war“ (20,34c). Erst nach dem Schlag Jhwhs und dem Verlust von 25 100 Mann „sahen die Söhne Benjamins, dass sie geschlagen waren“ (20,36a.b). Es ist erneut bezeichnend für diese Erzählung, dass die lange fehlende Erkenntnis (20,34c) und die endlich erlangte Einsicht in die bittere Niederlage (20,36a.b) nicht wörtlich zitiert, sondern vom Erzähler formuliert werden.

Ist mit der kritischen Einstellung gegenüber Benjamin auch eine versteckte Polemik gegen Saul verbunden, der aus Gibeon in Benjamin

⁽¹⁹⁾ Die Absicht der Männer von Gibeon „might very well be described as an attempt on his life, especially since his concubine actually died under the maltreatment.“ (MOORE, *Judges*, 424).

⁽²⁰⁾ Vgl. AULD, *Judges*, 241.

stammt?⁽²¹⁾ In der Erzählung über die Schandtat in Gibeon (19,1-30) ist der Kontrast zwischen der Gastfreundschaft Betlehems, der Heimat Davids, und dem Bruch des Gastrechts in Gibeon offenkundig. Aber auch in der vorliegenden Erzählung wird auf das Verbrechen in Gibeon zurückgeblickt (20,4c-6d) und an die Schuld des Stammes Benjamin erinnert (20,13d), die darin besteht, dass er die Verantwortlichen für das Verbrechen in der Stadt Gibeon deckt⁽²²⁾. Damit fällt sicher auch ein Schatten auf den Mann, der aus Gibeon kommt.

3. Ein theologisches Lehrstück

Bei aller Empörung über die Schandtat von Gibeon kann das Volk in Mizpa noch keinen allzu konkreten Beschluss fällen. Der Konflikt ließe sich noch rechtlich lösen, wenn die Benjaminiter der Forderung der Stämme Israels nachkommen und die Schuldigen ausliefern würden. Dann würde man die Verantwortlichen töten und das Böse aus Israel ausrotten (20,13). Die Forderung der Israeliten wird aber vom Stamm Benjamin abgelehnt, der sich hinter die Bürger von Gibeon stellt. Die Weigerung wird so formuliert, dass das entscheidende Problem nicht übersehen werden kann: Die Benjaminiter wollten nicht auf die Stimme "ihrer Brüder" hören. Dem Erzähler ist das Dilemma eines "Bruderkrieges" voll bewusst⁽²³⁾.

Die Israeliten greifen darum auch nicht einfach zu den Waffen, sondern befragen Gott (20,18) bzw. Jhwh (20,23.27a.28b-f). Dennoch erleiden sie zwei schwere Niederlagen (20,21.25)⁽²⁴⁾. Lehnt Gott den Bruderkrieg der erdrückenden Mehrheit gegen einen einzelnen Stamm ab? Dann bliebe unerklärt, warum er die Benjaminiter beim dritten Kampf schlägt (20,35a). Oder haben die Israeliten die ersten beiden Male Gott nicht in gebührender Weise befragt?⁽²⁵⁾ Bei der ersten

⁽²¹⁾ Y. AMIT, „Literature in the Service of Politics: Studies in Judges 19-21“, *Biblical Interpretation* 6 (Leiden – Boston – Köln 1998) 28-40, hat ihre These von einer "hidden polemic" gegen Sauls Königtum durch eine Fülle von Indizien zu begründen versucht.

⁽²²⁾ Vgl. Y. AMIT, *The Book of Judges. The Art of Editing* (Biblical Interpretation Series 38; Leiden 1999) 340.

⁽²³⁾ Vgl. P.E. SATTERTHWAIT, "No King in Israel": Narrative Criticism and Judges 17-21", *TynB* 44 (1993) 79: "the narrator stresses the idea of civil war."

⁽²⁴⁾ Vgl. zu diesem Abschnitt A. EVERSMAAN, "Gottesbefragung und Bruderkrieg in Ri 20", *BN* 136 (2008) (im Druck).

⁽²⁵⁾ Vgl. KLEIN, *Triumph*, 179f: "their questions are empty formalities since their plans have already been set. They ask, but not the right questions; and they are not prepared to accept that advice."

Anfrage (20,28) erkundigen sich die Söhne Israels nicht danach, ob sie gegen Benjamin kämpfen sollen, sondern setzen das offenbar voraus⁽²⁶⁾. Sie stellen nur eine taktische Frage⁽²⁷⁾. Nach der ersten Niederlage weinen die Israeliten vor Jhwh bis zum Abend. Danach formulieren sie auch die Frage anders: "Soll ich noch einmal zum Kampf mit den Söhnen Benjamins, meinem Bruder, antreten?" Die Antwort ist sehr knapp und auch etwas rätselhaft: עלו אלי (20,23). Das enklitische Personalpronomen bezieht sich auf den Bruder Benjamin. Die Präposition אל könnte darauf hinweisen, dass die Israeliten in friedlicher Absicht zu Benjamin hinaufziehen sollen (vgl. Gen 45,9; Ex 24,1.12; Num 27,12; Dtn 10,1; 32,49; Jos 10,4.6; 2 Kön 22,4). Wenn man allerdings die kriegerische Absicht beachtet, die in der Frage enthalten ist (למלחמה), dann ist doch eher zu übersetzen: "Zieh hinauf gegen ihn!"⁽²⁸⁾ Hätten die Israeliten außerdem darauf achten sollen, dass eine Überweisungsformel (vgl. Ri 20,28) fehlt? Die Verluste sind wiederum sehr hoch: 18 000 Mann fallen (20,25). Hat die etwas geringere Zahl der Gefallenen (vgl. 20,21) damit zu tun, dass die Israeliten den Sieg nicht mehr als selbstverständlich angesehen und ausdrücklich von ihrem "Bruder" gesprochen haben?⁽²⁹⁾ Die Umstände der dritten Anfrage, die konkrete Formulierung und die klare Antwort bestätigen die bisherigen Erwägungen. Jetzt ziehen "alle Söhne Israels und alles Volk" hinauf nach Bet-El. Sie weinen, verweilen und fasten bis zum Abend vor Jhwh und bringen Brand- wie Heilsopfer dar. Die folgende Anfrage lautet noch etwas vorsichtiger als beim zweiten Mal (20,28b.c): "Soll ich noch einmal zum Kampf mit den Söhnen Benjamins, meinem Bruder, ausziehen oder soll ich davon ablassen?" Die Antwort Jhwhs enthält nun zum ersten Mal die Übergabeformel (20,28).

Nimmt man alle drei Fragen und Antworten samt ihrem Kontext zusammen, dann bilden sie eine genau aufeinander abgestimmte Steigerung mit klarer theologischer Ausrichtung⁽³⁰⁾. Je vorsichtiger

⁽²⁶⁾ Nach Boling (*Judges*, 286) vergessen die Israeliten zu fragen: "Shall we go, or not?"

⁽²⁷⁾ Vgl. AULD, *Judges*, 248: "It is only to the subsidiary tactical question that God responds: Judah first."

⁽²⁸⁾ So auch Klein (*Triumph*, 181). Vgl. 1 Sam 14,12; Jes 36,10; Jer 49,28.31.

⁽²⁹⁾ So Klein (*Triumph*, 181).

⁽³⁰⁾ Satterthwaite ("No King", 78) spricht von einer "structure of intensification". T. Veijola (*Verheißung in der Krise* [AASF B 220; Helsinki 1982] 187 Anm. 39) erkennt ebenfalls "eine stufenweise steigende Reihe". Vgl. jetzt auch M. KÖHLMOOS, *Bet-El – Erinnerungen an eine Stadt* (FAT 59; Tübingen 2006) 286.

Israel seine Anfragen formuliert und je stärker es seine Abhängigkeit von Jhwh durch Klagen, Fasten und Opfer unterstreicht, desto näher rückt die Hilfe Jhwhs. Im Folgenden ist von einem ausdrücklichen Eingreifen Jhwhs tatsächlich die Rede. Der Mitteilung, dass die Israeliten 25 100 Benjaminiter vernichtet haben⁽³¹⁾, geht der Satz voran, dass Jhwh Benjamin geschlagen habe (20,35a).

4. *Resümee zur synchronen Analyse*

Die Erzählung aus dem vermeintlichen "Anhang" des Richterbuches enthält für den aufmerksamen Leser eine Reihe von Überraschungen, die zu näherer Beschäftigung mit dem Bruderkrieg zwischen dem Volk Israel und einem seiner Stämme anregen können. Dabei lässt sich nicht leugnen, dass aus der Perspektive Israels und nicht aus derjenigen Benjamins erzählt wird. Die drei Anfragen bei Gott bzw. Jhwh lassen sich samt ihrem Kontext erst dann verstehen, wenn man sie miteinander vergleicht. Das Lehrstück weist darauf hin, was alles gefordert ist, damit der Wille Gottes ernsthaft erkundet werden kann. Sollte mit dieser Erzählung eine allzu leichtfertige Praxis der Gottesbefragung in Zweifel gezogen werden? Dann wäre interessant zu erfahren, zu welcher Zeit die Erzählung entstanden ist.

II. Die diachrone Analyse

Die Zeit der Entstehung einer Erzählung lässt sich in der Regel kaum festlegen. Es wäre schon viel gewonnen, wenn zu erkennen wäre, ob die Erzählung auf einen einzigen Autor zurückgeht oder ob sich Spuren finden lassen, die auf einen Werdegang des Textes hinweisen. Dabei soll hier keineswegs der Eindruck erweckt werden, als könnte man die Entstehung der Erzählung noch lückenlos nachweisen. Angesichts der Meinungen, die in der Forschung heute sehr weit auseinandergehen, genügt es, wenn einige der bisher schon diskutierten Fragen aufgegriffen werden. Nachdem die Literarkritik etwas von ihrer einstigen Attraktion verloren hat und der Endtext "wiederentdeckt" worden ist, versteht es sich von selbst, dass wir uns innerhalb der diachronen Analyse auf gewichtige Argumente beschränken.

⁽³¹⁾ Soggin (*Judges*, 293.296) schwächt die Bedeutung des im Hifil gebrauchten Verbums שחט ab und denkt daran, dass die Benjaminiter nur in die Flucht geschlagen worden seien.

1. Grammatische und syntaktische Beobachtungen

Am dritten Tag sagen die Israeliten, dass sie fliehen und Benjamin von der Stadt weg auf die *Straßen* locken wollen (20,32c-e). Im vorangehenden Vers sind die Benjaminer aber schon auf den *Straßen*, die näher beschrieben werden, und erschlagen dort 30 Israeliten. Diese Spannung zwischen den Versen wird dadurch ein wenig ausgeglichen, dass die Benjaminer schon vor ihren ersten Erfolgen von der Stadt weggelockt worden sind (20,31b: הֲחִקוּ מִן־הָעִיר). Dieser Satz hat also die Funktion zu erklären, warum das später genannte Ziel (20,32c-e) schon früher (20,31c) erreicht worden ist. Dennoch ist "der (asyndetische) Anschluss ... hart" ⁽³²⁾ und "in Prosa kaum belegt" ⁽³³⁾. Merkwürdig ist auch "die schwierige und ungewöhnliche Hofal-Form" ⁽³⁴⁾, bei der das ו erhalten bleibt und nicht assimiliert wird. Das entspricht eher der aramäischen als der hebräischen Grammatik. Wird hier schon der Einfluss der aramäischen Volkssprache spürbar? Denn im Aramäischen fehlt das konsekutive Imperfekt — von der frühen Zakirinschrift einmal abgesehen ⁽³⁵⁾. Auf diese Weise ließen sich auch die asyndetischen Perfektformen in 20,43 erklären ⁽³⁶⁾.

Bei der dritten Befragung wird auch der Dienst des Priesters Pinhas vor der Lade erwähnt (20,27b-28a). Pinhas, der Sohn Eleasars und Enkel Aarons, hatte schon einmal den Zorn Gottes von den Israeliten abgewandt und damit ihr Leben gerettet (Num 25,11) ⁽³⁷⁾. Es verwundert also nicht, dass Josephus Flavius an eine Mittlerrolle des Pinhas denkt ⁽³⁸⁾. Durch die Erwähnung des Pinhas und der Lade wird jedoch der anschließende Infinitiv לִשְׁמֹר sehr weit von der Redeeinleitung (Ri 20,27a) getrennt. Deshalb sind die Äußerungen

⁽³²⁾ BECKER, *Richterzeit*, 277.

⁽³³⁾ W. GROSS, *Die Satzteilfolge im Verbalsatz alttestamentlicher Prosa untersucht an den Büchern Dtn, Ri und 2Kön* (FAT 17; Tübingen 1996) 96. Gross (ib. Anm. 4) verweist auf Belege innerhalb von Erzählung (Ri 18,17b.c und 20,43a-c) und Rede (2 Kön 20,5d.e).

⁽³⁴⁾ GROSS, *Satzteilfolge*, 96.

⁽³⁵⁾ Vgl. St. SEGERT, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig 1975) 246.

⁽³⁶⁾ Vgl. J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuch* (Berlin 1963) 232: Die Asyndeta "verstoßen gegen den alten Sprachgebrauch". Ähnlich Moore (*Judges*, 443).

⁽³⁷⁾ Vgl. B.E. ORGAN, "Pursuing Phinehas: A synchronic reading", *CBQ* 63 (2001) 203-218.

⁽³⁸⁾ Jos Ant V 2,10. Vgl. C.T. BEGG, "Josephus' Account of the Benjaminite War", *SBFLA* 48 (1998) 286. Klein (*Triumph*, 182) geht auch von einer Mittlertätigkeit des Pinhas aus.

über Pinhas und seinen Dienst an der Lade in 20,27b-28a als "sekundäre Erläuterung" zu verstehen⁽³⁹⁾. Die genannten Beispiele mögen genügen um zu zeigen, dass späte Bearbeitungen und Erweiterungen nicht ausgeschlossen werden können⁽⁴⁰⁾.

2. Wiederholungen

Wiederholungen können heute nicht mehr unreflektiert als Indizien für das Wachstum eines Textes angesehen werden. Dennoch verdienen sie auch unter diachroner Perspektive Aufmerksamkeit.

Die Benjaminer erschlagen am dritten Tag zweimal je dreißig Israeliten (20,31c und 39b) und stellen danach jeweils voreilig fest, dass die Israeliten wie beim ersten Mal geschlagen worden seien (20,32a,b und 39c,d). Da fast die gleichen Lexeme gebraucht werden, beziehen sich die Worte des Erzählers wie die der Benjaminer offenbar auf das gleiche Geschehen in der erzählten Welt. Beim näheren Vergleich fällt auf, dass der Erfolg der Benjaminer in der Wiederholung (20,39b) klarer formuliert ist, während beim ersten Mal (20,31c) die ausführliche Beschreibung des Kampfplatzes störend dazwischentritt. Außerdem ist die Absicht der Israeliten, die Benjaminer von der Stadt abzuziehen und auf die Straßen locken zu wollen (20,32c-e), schon mit einem Satz vorweggenommen worden (20,31b)⁽⁴¹⁾.

In der zweiten Schilderung des dritten Tages wird immer wieder betont, dass sich Benjamin umgewendet bzw. umgedreht hat (20,40b.42a.45a.47a); das Verbum פָּחַד wird hier zum Leitwort. Dreimal wird damit die Flucht der Benjaminer eingeleitet. Beim ersten Mal wird die Wüste als Ziel angegeben (20,42a), beim zweiten Mal der Fels Rimmon genannt (20,45a) und beim dritten Mal die Zahl der Geretteten und die Aufenthaltsdauer mitgeteilt (20,47). Die Wiederholungen unterstreichen den Erfolg der Israeliten und sind als solche unverdächtig. Vielleicht sind sie aber zum Teil auch als "Wiederaufnahmen" zu verstehen, die nötig geworden sind, nachdem man andere Sätze eingeschoben hat, die syntaktisch auffällig (20,43)

⁽³⁹⁾ Vgl. J. THON, *Pinhas Ben Eleasar — der levitische Priester am Ende der Tora* (Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 20; Leipzig 2006) 95.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Vgl. WELLHAUSEN, *Composition*, 232 und MOORE, *Judges*, 427.437.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Die Indizien für einen sekundären Charakter von 20,31b ist unter 2.1 schon genannt worden.

oder kaum verständlich (20,42c)⁽⁴²⁾ sind⁽⁴³⁾. Gelegentlich wird auch gefragt, ob die zuerst genannte Zahl von 18 000 gefallenen Benjaminern nicht die ursprüngliche Angabe ist⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Mit diesen Erwägungen soll nicht der Eindruck erweckt werden, als könnten wir eine von Dubletten freie, ursprüngliche Erzählung rekonstruieren. Es handelt sich nun einmal um eine zerdehnte Erzählung⁽⁴⁵⁾.

3. Die Versammlung der Gemeinde

Die Versammlung in Mizpa wird dadurch eingeleitet, dass "alle Söhne Israels" ausziehen, die "Gemeinde" sich versammelt und nicht nur die "Häupter des ganzen Volkes" zusammentreten, sondern auch "alle Stämme Israels." Dass das dreimal wiederholte כל und die wechselnden Bezeichnungen für Israel einen wirksamen Kontrast zur Abwesenheit Benjamins bilden sollen, wurde schon gesagt. Zu fragen ist aber, ob hier immer schon alle unterschiedlichen Ausdrücke für Israel genutzt worden sind. Der Gebrauch der Wendung ותקהל העדה (vgl. Lev 8,4; Num 17,7)⁽⁴⁶⁾ weist z.B. auf eine Nähe zur Priesterschrift hin. Das gilt auch für den einzigartigen Terminus "Versammlung des Volkes Gottes" (קהל עם האלהים), der sich innerhalb des Alten Testaments allein an dieser Stelle findet. Diese Ausdrücke können Indizien dafür sein, dass die Erzählung aus nachexilischer Zeit stammt und in zeitlicher Nähe zur Priesterschrift entstanden ist⁽⁴⁷⁾. Es fällt

⁽⁴²⁾ Nach K. Budde (*Richter*, 138) geht es in 20,42c darum, dass auch die Benjaminer aus den übrigen Städten "nun ihr Schwert gegen die von Gibeon wenden." Da aber das Gros des Stammes vernichtet wird, sei das ein "irreführender Einschub." Vgl. auch MOORE, *Judges*, 440.

⁽⁴³⁾ Moore (*Judges*, 435) spricht bei diesen Versen von "later amplification and embellishment". 20,47 sei ursprünglich auf 20,42a und 44a gefolgt, vgl. ib. 444.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Vgl. BUDDE, *Richter*, 138; MOORE, *Judges*, 441, und BURNEY, *Judges*, 448.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Vgl. BURNEY, *Judges*, 447, und Sh. SHNITZER, „Politische Propaganda in Richter 19-21“ (Hebr.), *Bet Mikra* 35 (1989) 27.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Zur Versammlung der „ganzen Gemeinde der Söhne Israels“ vgl. die Priesterschrift in Ex 35,1; Num 8,9 sowie die priesterlich gefärbten Texte in Jos 18,1 und 22,12.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ So z.B. Becker (*Richterzeit*, 272.286-287). Die Bezeichnung des Efraimiters als Levit weist in die gleiche Richtung. Vgl. jetzt H.-J. STIPP, "Richter 19 — ein frühes Beispiel schriftgestützter politischer Propaganda in Israel", *Ein Herz so weit wie der Sand am Ufer des Meeres*. FS Georg Hentschel (Hrsg. S. GILLMAYR-BUCHER — A. GIERCKE — Ch. NIEßEN) (EThSt 90; Würzburg 2006) 132-133.

jedoch auf, dass Israel im ganzen Kapitel nicht mehr „Gemeinde“ genannt wird. Das priesterliche Interesse beschränkt sich also vorwiegend auf den Anfang der Erzählung.

4. Die Rolle der „*Stämme Israels*“

Es ist bereits gesagt worden, dass die pathetische Ankündigung des Volkes in Mizpa (20,9a) die Erwartung weckt, dass nun einschneidende Maßnahmen genannt werden. Statt dessen ist nur von Verpflegung die Rede (20,10a). Das ist insofern nicht verwunderlich, da die Benjaminer die Auslieferung der Schuldigen nicht abgelehnt haben (20,13d) und so lange das Volk nicht entscheiden kann, was getan werden soll. Die Verzögerung ist erzähltechnisch gut begründet. Rechtlich wird hier der Versuch gemacht, nur die Schuldigen zu bestrafen, um das Böse aus Israel auszutilgen (Dtn 7,12; 19,13; 22,22) und so den Bruderkrieg zu vermeiden. Es fällt aber auf, dass — von der Einleitung (Ri 20,2) einmal abgesehen — nur in den retardierenden Versen von den „*Stämmen Israels*“ gesprochen wird (20,10a.12a). Darum darf zumindest gefragt werden, ob die Verzögerung nach der dramatischen Ankündigung immer schon zur Erzählung gehört hat. Da aber ausreichende Kriterien für eine literarkritische Folgerung fehlen, wird man nur eine vorsichtige Frage äußern können.

5. „*Söhne Israels*“ und „*Mann Israels*“

Der Kampf am dritten Tag wird — wie oben schon betont — zweimal erzählt. In der ersten Version (20,29-36b) verfolgen die „*Söhne Israels*“ eine besondere Taktik. Sie versuchen die Benjaminer durch eine Scheinflucht von der Stadt Gibea auf die Straßen der Region zu locken (פָּרַג), um in offener Feldschlacht den widerspenstigen Stamm zu besiegen (20,32c-e)⁽⁴⁸⁾. Der Hinterhalt wird zwar auch erwähnt (20,29.33c), spielt aber nur eine untergeordnete Rolle. Im zweiten Abschnitt (20,36c-42b.44-47) verfolgt der „*Mann Israels*“⁽⁴⁹⁾ eine andere Strategie: Die von den Verteidigern entblößte Stadt kann vom Hinterhalt eingenommen und angezündet werden. Der aufsteigende Rauch zeigt den Benjaminern, dass das Unheil über sie gekommen ist⁽⁵⁰⁾. Der Ausdruck „*Mann*

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Vgl. bereits BUDDE, *Richter*, 136.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Diese Bezeichnung findet sich in 20,36c-42a.48; vgl. bereits 20,11.17.20².22.31.33.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Vgl. BURNEY, *Judges*, 455.

Israels" steht im Alten Testament vielfach für das Aufgebot der kämpfenden Israeliten⁽⁵¹⁾. Die Unterschiede in der Bezeichnung — "Söhne Israels" (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) und "Mann Israels" (אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) — sowie in der Taktik werfen die Frage auf, ob wir es hier nicht mit zwei unterschiedlichen Erzählvarianten zu tun haben. So könnten sich auch manche Bewegungen erklären lassen, von denen vor und während der ersten Kämpfe gesprochen wird. Bevor die Benjaminer eine Auslieferung an die "Söhne Israels" abgelehnt haben (20,13d), versammeln sich bereits "alle Männer Israels" bei der Stadt (20,11). Dieser Aufmarsch kommt — verglichen mit dem unmittelbaren Kontext — zu früh⁽⁵²⁾. Nachdem die "Söhne Israels" ihr Lager gegenüber Gibeon aufgeschlagen haben (20,19), stellt sich auch der "Mann Israels" in Schlachtordnung vor Gibeon auf (20,20). Warum wird zweimal dasselbe mit anderen Worten gesagt? Wenig später verwundert, dass sich der "Mann Israels" erneut zum Kampf gruppiert hat (20,22), während die "Söhne Israels" noch hinaufziehen, um Jhwh zu befragen, ob sie überhaupt zum Kampf gegen ihren Bruder antreten sollen (20,23). Die früher beliebte Umstellung der Verse⁽⁵³⁾ berücksichtigt nicht die verschiedenen Bezeichnungen der Israeliten.

Mit den Beobachtungen zu Ort und Bewegung lassen sich auch die Zeitangaben in Beziehung setzen. Die "Söhne Israels" kämpfen an drei aufeinander folgenden Tagen mit den Benjaminern (vgl. 20,19.24.30) und erleiden vor ihrem Sieg zwei Niederlagen. Wie können die Benjaminer nach ersten Erfolgen am dritten Tag dann sagen: "Sicher wird Israel vor uns völlig geschlagen wie beim ersten Mal." (20,32b und 39d) Müssten sie nicht sagen: "wie beim ersten und zweiten Mal?" Gab es zwei oder drei Kämpfe zwischen Israel und Benjamin? Die Antwort hängt davon ab, ob man die Verse von den "Söhnen Israels" oder jene vom "Mann Israels" in den Blick nimmt. Denn nach der ersten Niederlage (vgl. 20,20) stellt sich der "Mann Israels" zwar wieder an derselben Stelle wie beim ersten Mal auf (20,22), aber von einem wirklichen Kampf des "Mannes Israels" ist noch nicht die Rede. Der Kampf am zweiten Tag wird allein von den "Söhnen Israels"

⁽⁵¹⁾ Vgl. Jos 9,6-7; 10,24; Ri 7,23; 8,22; 9,55; 21,1; 1 Sam 13,6; 14,24; 17,2,25; 2 Sam 15,13; 16,15; 19,42.43.44²; 23,9; 1 Chr 10,1.7. Es können auch "alle Israeliten" (כָּל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) gemeint sein (Dtn 27,14; 29,9; Ri 7,8; 1 Sam 14,22; 17,19; 2 Sam 16,18; 17,14.24; 19,42; 20,2; 1 Kön 8,2; 1 Chr 10,7; 2 Chr 5,3), in einigen Fällen sogar Individuen (Num 25,8².14; Ri 7,14; 2 Sam 19,23; vgl. 1 Chr 16,3).

⁽⁵²⁾ Vgl. BECKER, *Richterzeit*, 272, und bereits BURNEY, *Judges*, 448.

⁽⁵³⁾ So BURNEY, *Judges*, 448.

geführt, nachdem diese Jhwh befragt haben (20,23-25). Der triumphierende Rückblick der Benjaminiter, der sich nur auf einen vorangehenden Kampf bezieht (20,39d), passt also lediglich zur Erzählungsversion vom "Mann Israels". Das vermeintliche Anzeichen des Sieges ist später — zusammen mit dem Fall von etwa 30 Mann — in die Variante übernommen worden, die vorwiegend von den "Söhnen Israels" erzählt (20,32b)⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Angesichts der unterschiedlichen Strategien ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass der Erzähler zweimal von der entscheidenden Niederlage der Benjaminiter spricht (20,35 und 46). Denn eine Kampfschilderung schließt in der Regel mit der Angabe der Gefallenen⁽⁵⁵⁾. Die Angaben über die Verluste der Benjaminiter stimmen jedoch in den beiden Fällen nicht überein. Nach dem Sieg des "Mannes Israels" ist von 25 000 Gefallenen die Rede, wobei die während der Flucht getöteten 5000 und 2000 eigens angegeben werden (20,44-46)⁽⁵⁶⁾. Die "Söhne Israels" strecken aber 25 100 Benjaminiter nieder. Diese detailliertere Zahl ergibt sich aus einem "Rechenexempel"⁽⁵⁷⁾: Ausgehend von einer Zahl von 25 000 gemusterten Benjaminitern⁽⁵⁸⁾ werden jene 700 hinzugezählt, die offenbar aus Gibeä und nicht aus den anderen benjaminitischen Städten kommen (20,15b). Davon werden die 600 Benjaminiter abgerechnet, die sich zum Rimmon-Felsen flüchten konnten (20,47).

Unter dem Aspekt der Theologie fällt auf, dass nur die "Söhne Israels" mit einer Befragung Gottes oder Jhwhs in Verbindung gebracht werden. Die Version vom "Mann Israels" (20,11.17.20.22.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Für Moore (*Judges*, 436.439) ist ebenfalls 20,31 eindeutig jünger als 20,39. Anders Budde (*Richter*, 138) der 20,39 für eine "glossatorische und harmonistische Wiederholung" hält.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Moore (*Judges*, 437) verweist auf Ri 20,21.25 sowie auf Ri 3,29 und Jos 8,25 und folgert: "The statement of the total loss properly concludes the account of the battle."

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Nach Burney (*Judges*, 448) ist die ursprüngliche Zahl von 18 000 Gefallenen nachträglich auf 25 000 erhöht worden, um die Differenz gegenüber 20,35 wenigstens ungefähr auszugleichen.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ BUDDE, *Richter*, 136.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Im MT, in der Peschitta und im Targum ist von 26 000 gemusterten Benjaminitern die Rede. U. Becker (*Richterzeit*, 274), hält diese höhere Zahl für ursprünglich. Ihr stehen aber 25 000 im Alexandrinus, in der Syrohexapla und in der Vulgata gegenüber. Der Vaticanus kommt sogar nur auf 23 000. Berücksichtigt man die Tendenz, Zahlen zu erhöhen, dann ist die gut bezeugte Zahl von 25 000 Benjaminitern vorzuziehen. Vgl. BUDDE, *Richter*, 135; BURNLEY, *Judges*, 475, und RÖSEL, "Studien", 32 Anm. 129.

33a.36c-42a) lässt keinen Bezug zum Gott Israels erkennen, sondern widmet ihre besondere Aufmerksamkeit der Kriegstaktik. Diese Differenz tritt zu den Unterschieden in Bewegungen, Zeitangaben, Höhepunkten und Verlustangaben noch hinzu und legt nahe, dass es sich bei der Erzählung vom "Mann Israels" um eine zwar nur fragmentarisch erhaltene, aber durchaus eigenständige Version handelt.

6. Unterschiedliche Erzählfäden oder Bearbeitung?

Es ist allerdings umstritten, ob die beiden Versionen von den "Söhnen Israels" und dem "Mann Israels" selbständige Erzählfäden darstellen⁽⁵⁹⁾ oder ob eine der beiden Fassungen als bloße Erweiterung anzusehen ist. U. Becker hat sich für die zweite Lösung ausgesprochen. Die Erzählung von den "Söhnen Israels" ergibt einen "gut nachvollziehbaren Geschehensablauf", während die Sätze, die vom "Mann Israels" sprechen, "in den als sekundär erkannten Versen" stehen⁽⁶⁰⁾. Es ist zweifellos richtig, dass wir die Version vom "Mann Israels" nicht mehr lückenlos rekonstruieren können⁽⁶¹⁾. Sieht man sich die Argumentation U. Beckers aber näher an, dann misst er die Verse über die "Männer Israels" an der besser erhaltenen Erzählung über die "Söhne Israels". Die Versammlung "aller Männer Israels" bei der Stadt (20,11) setze voraus, dass die Benjaminiter schon nach Gibeon gelangt sind (20,14). Also liege es "nahe, v. 11 als einen späteren Einschub zu betrachten"⁽⁶²⁾. Die Musterung des "Mannes Israels" (20,17) sei wegen der überhöhten Zahl sekundär. Die erste Aufstellung des "Mannes Israels" (20,20) unterbricht nach U. Becker den Kontext (20,19 und 21). Ist damit aber schon entschieden, dass 20,20 "sekundär" ist?⁽⁶³⁾ Weil 20,22 ebenfalls den Ablauf der Handlung stört und ähnliche Lexeme wie 20,20 verwendet, wird über ihn das gleiche Urteil gefällt. Der Rückzug des "Mannes Israels" (20,36c), der mit dem Vertrauen auf den Hinterhalt begründet wird (20,36d), passt gleichfalls nicht "zum bisherigen Ablauf"⁽⁶⁴⁾. Da sich nicht nur 20,37, sondern auch 20,38-46 gut zu 20,36c.d fügen, ist für U. Becker der sekundäre Charakter der Version vom "Mann Israels" erwiesen. Weil 20,36c-46

⁽⁵⁹⁾ So MOORE, *Judges*, 438; BURNEY, *Judges*, 449-458.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ BECKER, *Richterzeit*, 279.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Vgl. RÖSEL, "Studien, 32.

⁽⁶²⁾ BECKER, *Richterzeit*, 272.

⁽⁶³⁾ IBID., 275.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ IBID., 278.

“im Ablauf und in der Taktik etwa Jos 8,4-28”⁽⁶⁵⁾ entsprechen, “nimmt der Ergnzer Elemente aus Jos 7-8 und dem vorliegenden Grundbestand auf, um den ursprnglichen Schlachtbericht in seinem Sinne zu erweitern und zu korrigieren”⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Grundstzlich ist zu fragen, ob es nicht voreilig ist, mit der Literarkritik zu beginnen und die Verse ber den “Mann Israels” an der vermeintlichen Grunderzhlung ber die “Shne Israels” zu messen. Methodisch korrekter ist es sicher, den Endtext unter verschiedenen Aspekten zu untersuchen und die unterschiedlichen Vorstellungen ber Bewegungen, Zeiten, Handlungen, Zahlen und Gottesbezug zu analysieren. Auf diese Weise wird die Eigenstndigkeit der Version vom “Mann Israels” besser gewahrt⁽⁶⁷⁾. Eine kurze bersicht mag die Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Erzhlungsvarianten noch einmal beleuchten:

Bezeichnung	בני ישראל	איש ישראל
Strategie (Ort)	Fortlocken auf die Straen Aufbruch des Hinterhalts	momentaner Rckzug Hinterhalt erstrmt Gibeon
Zeitangaben	drei Kmpfe	zwei Kmpfe
Zahl der Verluste	genaue Zahl (25 100)	runde Zahl (25 000)
Gottesbezug	drei Befragungen Jhwhs	Strategie ohne Weisung Jhwhs

Es gibt sogar Argumente, die fr ein hheres Alter der Version vom “Mann Israels” sprechen: (1) Dem Sieg des “Mannes Israels” geht nur eine einzige Niederlage voraus. Die Zahl der Kmpfe ist in der Version von den “Shnen Israels” erhht worden. (2) Da niedrigeren Zahlen im Zweifelsfall eher vertraut werden darf, knnen die zunchst geringeren Verluste der Benjaminer in der Variante vom “Mann Israels” (Ri 20,44) nachtrglich aufgestockt worden sein (20,45). In der Erzhlung ber die “Shne Israels” ergibt sich die genaue Zahl (20,35b) aus einer komplizierten Berechnung. (3) Der “Mann Israels” siegt allein auf Grund seiner Strategie; von einer Hilfe Gottes ist keine Rede. Demgegenber lernen die “Shne Israels” unter hohen Verlusten, wie man Gott befragt, und erfahren endlich auch dessen entscheidende Hilfe (20,35a).

7. Zum Vergleich mit der Eroberung der Stadt Ai (Jos 8)

Die Frage nach der lteren Erzhlungsvariante kann aber nur beantwortet werden, wenn man die Eroberung der Stadt Ai (Jos 7 und 8) mit

⁽⁶⁵⁾ IBID., 285.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ IBID., 286.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Moore (*Judges*, 435) hlt die Erzhlungsvariante vom “Mann Israels” sogar fr die ltere.

Ri 20 vergleicht. Lassen sich Ähnlichkeiten in Sprache und Handlung zwischen Jos 8 und Ri 20 schon generell nicht leugnen⁽⁶⁸⁾, so gilt das insbesondere für die Version vom “Mann Israels”. Beide Male folgt auf eine erste herbe Niederlage (Jos 8,4b-5 // Ri 20,20.22) ein grandioser Erfolg (Jos 8,18-23 // Ri 20,36c-47). Die anfänglichen Verluste im zweiten Kampf gegen Benjamin (Ri 20,39b) erinnern in ihrer Höhe noch an die 36 Gefallenen in der Auseinandersetzung mit Ai (Jos 8,5a). Die Scheinflucht der Israeliten lässt ihre Gegner voreilig triumphieren (Jos 8,5.6 // Ri 20,39). Der Hinterhalt hat in beiden Fällen die Aufgabe, die Stadt zu besetzen und anzuzünden, so dass der Rauch zum Himmel steigt und für Sieger wie Besiegte zum Signal wird (Jos 8,19-21 // Ri 20,38.40).

Demgegenüber weist die Erzählvariante von den “Söhnen Israels” nicht so viele Beziehungen zu Jos 8 auf. Gemeinsam ist beiden Erzählungen allerdings eine Scheinflucht (Jos 8,6.16 // Ri 20,32)⁽⁶⁹⁾. Dabei wird das Verbum נתק im Sinne von “fortlocken” gebraucht (Jos 8,6.16; Ri 20,31.32). Die unterschiedliche Anzahl von vergleichbaren Zügen legt den Gedanken nahe, dass vor allem die Version vom “Mann Israels” von der Erzählung über die Eroberung Ais abhängig ist⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Aber wir dürfen die Unterschiede zwischen Jos 8 und Ri 20 in Sprache und Semantik nicht übersehen⁽⁷¹⁾. In Jos 8 ist weder vom “Mann Israels” noch von “Söhnen Israels” die Rede. Der Wendung “in Brand stecken” (Jos 8,8.19: יצת באש) steht “Rauch aufsteigen lassen” (Ri 20,38.40: עלה עשן) gegenüber. Selbst das seltene Verbum נתק wird in Jos 8,6.16 und Ri 20,31.32 in unterschiedlichen Stammformen gebraucht. Hinzu kommen wesentliche Differenzen im Gottesbezug. In Jos 8 erteilt Jhwh vor und während des Kampfes klare Anweisungen (8,1-2.18). In der Erzählungsversion über die “Söhne Israels” antwortet Jhwh lediglich auf Fragen (Ri 20,18.23.28) und bestätigt nur die letzte Auskunft mit einem Schlag gegen Benjamin (20,35a), von dem in Jos 8 nicht die Rede ist. Im Erzählfaden vom “Mann Israels” fehlt jeglicher Gottesbezug.

Was folgt aus diesen Beobachtungen? Es ist nicht auszuschließen, dass sich zumindest die Erzählung vom “Mann Israels” an die

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Vgl. RÖSEL, “Studien”, 34 Anm. 140, und G.T.K. WONG, *Compositional Strategy of the Book of Judges*. An Inductive, Rhetorical Study (VTS 111; Leiden – Boston 2006) 58-63.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Vgl. BECKER, *Richterzeit*, 284.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Vgl. IBID., 286.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Darauf weist jetzt auch Wong (*Strategy*, 63-65) hin.

Erzählung von der Eroberung Ais anlehnt. Die Bezeichnung "Mann Israels" und der fehlende Gottesbezug sprechen aber dafür, dass diese Variante eine eigenständige Tradition und keinesfalls nur eine Kopie von Jos 8 ist.

8. Zur zeitlichen Ansetzung

Lässt sich auch noch etwas über das Alter der Erzählung sagen? Der Gebrauch der Wendung וְהָקָהּ הָעֵדָה (Ri 20,1b), die Bezeichnung des Efraimiters als Leviten (20,4a) und die Erwähnung des Priesters Pinhas samt der Lade (20,27b.28a) weisen darauf hin, dass zumindest mit einer priesterlichen Bearbeitung in nachexilischer Zeit zu rechnen ist. Diesem Befund entsprechen die asyndetischen Perfektformen (20,31b.43). Auf eine relativ späte Zeit weist auch der Ausdruck נֶמֶס hin (20,6d), der am häufigsten beim Propheten Ezechiel (Ez 16,27.43.58; 22,9.11; 23,21.27.29.35.44) und im Buch Leviticus (Lev 18,17; 19,29; 20,14²) gebraucht ist. Damit hebt sich die Erzählung vom Bruderkrieg deutlich von der vorangehenden Erzählung (Ri 19) ab, die H.-J. Stipp noch aus der davidischen Zeit herleitet⁽⁷²⁾. Auch wenn die drei letzten Kapitel des Richterbuches einen durchlaufenden Erzählfaden erkennen lassen, können sie doch nicht in der gleichen Zeit angesetzt werden⁽⁷³⁾.

Die Forderung nach der Auslieferung der Verantwortlichen in Gibeon lässt erkennen, dass auch dtr Sprache übernommen worden ist. Denn die Stämme wollen das Böse aus Israel ausrotten (Ri 20,13c; vgl. Dtn 13,6, 17,7.12; 19,19; 21,21; 22,21.22.24; 24,7). Es kann aber keine Rede davon sein, dass die gesamte Erzählung ein dtr Gewand trage.

Lässt sich etwas über das Alter der beiden Erzählfäden sagen? Innerhalb der ersten Antwort Gottes nach seiner Befragung durch die "Söhne Israels" fällt auf, dass dem Stamm Juda eine besondere Rolle zugewiesen wird (vgl. Ri 1,1-4). Sollte die erste Befragung formuliert worden sein, als es nur noch den Staat Juda gab? Jhwh wird nicht nur hier (20,23.26-28), sondern auch sonst im Alten Testament häufig vor einem bevorstehenden Kampf befragt (שָׁאַל יְהוָה), und er antwortet in der Regel mit der Übergabeformel (Ri 1,1; 1 Sam 23,2.4; 30,8; 2 Sam

⁽⁷²⁾ STIPP, "Richter 19", 152. Y. Leshem ("Die Zeit der Abfassung der Erzählung von der Nebenfrau in Gibeon [Ri 19-21]" [Hebr.], *Bet Mikra* 165 [2001] 128-145), hat allerdings vertreten, dass alle drei Kapitel (Ri 19-21) aus der Zeit Sauls oder des frühen David stammen.

⁽⁷³⁾ Vgl. STIPP, "Richter 19", 133. Die gegenteilige Position vertritt allerdings Amit (*Literature*, 28-40).

5,19.23)⁽⁷⁴⁾. Einige Paralleltexte können noch aus der vorexilischen Zeit stammen⁽⁷⁵⁾. Ähnliches gilt für den Schlag Jhwhs gegen Benjamin (vgl. 1 Sam 4,3)⁽⁷⁶⁾. Klageriten der "Söhne Israels" hat es in der altherwürdigen Stadt Bet-El nach dem Zeugnis des Sacharja (7,3) schon "viele Jahre" vor der Ära des Darius gegeben, wahrscheinlich aber erst nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems 587 v.Chr.⁽⁷⁷⁾. Die Erzählung von den "Söhnen Israels" könnte also aus spätvorexilischer, aber auch aus exilischer Zeit stammen.

Der Ausdruck "Mann Israels" (Ri 20,11.17.20².22.31.33.36.38.39².41.42.48) begegnet auffallend oft in den Aufständen von Absalom und Scheba (2Sam 15,13; 16,15.18; 17,14.24; 19,23.42.43.44²; 20,2). Auch wenn der "Mann Israels" nur einmal im Kern der Erzählung über den Absalom-Aufstand (2 Sam 15,13) erscheint⁽⁷⁸⁾, dürfen die anderen Belege ebenso aus der vorexilischen Zeit hergeleitet werden.

III. Abschluss

Die diachrone Analyse hat zwar eine Reihe von Indizien nennen können, die den Werdegang errahnen lassen. Aber es handelt sich offenbar um einen komplizierten Prozess, der nicht mehr restlos entschlüsselt werden kann⁽⁷⁹⁾. Wer allzu weit über das hinaus geht, was sich am Endtext noch beobachten lässt, stößt mit Recht auf die zunehmende Skepsis gegenüber Literar- und Redaktionskritik.

Deutliche Unterschiede weisen vor allem die beiden Erzählungsvarianten von den "Söhnen Israels" und dem "Mann Israels" auf. Sie

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Anders in 1 Sam 10,22; 22,10; 28,6; 2 Sam 2,1; 1 Chr 10,13.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Vgl. A.A. FISCHER, *Von Hebron nach Jerusalem*. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie zur Erzählung von König David in II Sam 1-5 (BZAW 335; Berlin – New York 2004) 263-266 (zu 2 Sam 5,19.23) und 323 Anm. 165 (zu 1 Sam 23,1-5).

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Vgl. W. DIETRICH, *David*. Der Herrscher mit der Harfe (Biblische Gestalten 14; Leipzig 2006) 51.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Vgl. VEIJOLA, *Verheißung*, 194, und Ph. GUILLAUME, *Waiting for Josiah*. The Judges (JSOTSS 385; London – New York 2004) 204-207.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ R.G. Kratz (*Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments* [UTB 2157; Göttingen 2000] 181) sieht in 2 Sam 15,1-6.13; 18,1-19,9a den ältesten Bestand der Aufstandserzählung.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Vgl. BURNEY, *Judges*, 447: "its present form must have resulted from a very complicated process of combination and later working over". Ähnlich Sh. SHNITZER, "Politische Propaganda in Richter 19-21" (Hebr.), *Bet Mikra* 35 (1989) 27.

sollen noch etwas genauer charakterisiert werden. Die Version vom "Mann Israels" schildert den Bruderkrieg ähnlich wie den Kampf der Israeliten gegen die Stadt Ai (Jos 7 und 8): Nach einem ersten verlustreichen Kampf (Jos 7,2-5 // Ri 20,11.20.22) wird ein Hinterhalt gelegt (Jos 8,4b // Ri 20,29), der die Stadt einnimmt und anzündet (Jos 8,8a.b.19 // Ri 20,38), so dass das Schicksal der Unterlegenen besiegelt ist (Jos 8,20-21 // Ri 20,40-41). Aber anders als in Jos 8 fehlt jeglicher Gottesbezug. Der Autor der nur noch fragmentarisch erhaltenen Version konzentriert sich auf die militärische Strategie gegen den Stamm Benjamin, der allzu siegessicher ist und auf diese Weise negativ charakterisiert wird (Ri 20,39). Es lassen sich keine Bedenken gegen einen Krieg mit Benjamin erkennen, der mindestens ebenso hart wie der Kampf gegen die nichtisraelitische Stadt Ai geführt wird⁽⁸⁰⁾.

Die Variante von den "Söhnen Israels" hebt sich davon deutlich ab. Hier wird der Bruderkrieg mit Benjamin ausdrücklich problematisiert. Die erste Befragung Gottes zeigt, dass die Israeliten scheitern, wenn sie lediglich eine strategische Frage stellen (20,18-19.21). Auch ein zweiter Angriff auf Benjamin schlägt fehl, obwohl sich die Söhne Israels in der Befragung Jhwhs schon des Risikos eines Kampfes gegen den "Bruder" Benjamin bewusst sind (20,23-25). Erst auf die dritte Frage, ob sie noch einmal zum Kampf mit ihrem "Bruder" ausziehen oder es lieber lassen sollten, antwortet Jhwh mit der Übergabeformel (20,28b-f). Die begleitenden Klageriten und Opfer unterstreichen, dass es nicht allein auf die militärische Strategie ankommt. Dem Sieg der Israeliten (20,35b) wird bewusst der Schlag Jhwhs vorangestellt (20,35a). Die intensive theologische Reflexion über den „Bruderkrieg“ legt nahe, dass eine rein militärische Strategie — wie sie in der vorgegebenen, älteren Version vom "Mann Israels" zum Ausdruck kommt — als völlig unzureichend bewertet wird.

War ein Kampf mit dem Bruder Benjamin überhaupt notwendig? In einer Szene, die Musterung und Kämpfen vorangestellt ist, fordern die Stämme Israels von den Benjaminern die Auslieferung der Schuldigen, um auf diese Weise einen Krieg zu vermeiden (20,12-13). Die Formulierung "das Böse aus Israel austilgen" verrät schon eine dtr Hand (vgl. Dtn 7,12; 19,13; 22,22). Der Kampf der Brüder (vgl. Ri 20,13d) gegen Benjamin ist damit voll gerechtfertigt.

Die Erzählung ist aber auch in nachexilischer Zeit bearbeitet worden, wie die Fülle von Wiederholungen und Vorwegnahmen zeigt.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Vgl. WEBB, *Judges*, 192.

Unverkennbar ist die Nähe zu einem priesterlichen Horizont⁽⁸¹⁾. Es versammelt sich die Gemeinde (20,1b: וַתִּקְהַל הָעֵדָה). Alle Stämme — von Benjamin abgesehen — bilden die “Versammlung des Volkes Gottes” (בְּקֹהֵל עִם הָאֱלֹהִים; 20,2a). Damit wird der besondere religiöse, nicht-militärische Charakter der Zusammenkunft unterstrichen. Der Zeuge für das Verbrechen von Gibeon ist ein Levit (20,4-5). Die Befragung Jhwwhs in Bet-El wird dadurch legitimiert, dass sich dort die Lade befand, der der Priester Pinhas diente (20,27b.28a).

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SUMMARY

The story about Israel's war against their brother Benjamin (Judg 20) is told from Israel's perspective. Benjamin almost does not get a word in edgeways. But the fight against their “brother” Benjamin is only then successful, when Israel shows confidence in God by weeping, fasting and making sacrifices. Conspicuous repetitions and syntactical disturbances point to a thorough revision. If one pays attention to the distinction of names — “sons of Israel” and “man of Israel” — and to the differences in structure and strategy, dates and times, numbers and theology, then the second account of the last fighting (20,36c-47*) turns out to be a part of an independent tradition. A younger narrator added to this old narrative, that the “sons of Israel” learned to inquire of God after two setbacks, and God helped them to defeat Benjamin, their “brother”. The contribution of the deuteronomistic and priestly redactions is relatively small.

(81) STIPP, “Richter 19”, 135.

“In My Own Hand”: Grapho-Literacy and the Apostle Paul

I. “In My Own Hand”

That the apostle Paul was a literate individual is well-established and beyond doubt⁽¹⁾. However, in the ancient world as today, “literacy” was not a homogeneous entity but rather existed in shades and gradations. The present essay is thus concerned not with Paul’s literacy per se, but rather the degree of literacy Paul held in Greek, and, more importantly, how he employed and displayed his literate status in a rhetorical fashion. Recent research in the school papyri of Greco-Roman Egypt has yielded new insights into the process by which individuals learned to read and write in the Greco-Roman world, insights that shed new light on five passages where Paul (or someone writing in his name)⁽²⁾ highlights the fact that he has written in the epistle with his own hand. I will suggest that these passages enhance Paul’s arguments in the epistles, and social position in the congregations, by underscoring not only his literacy, but his grapho-literacy; and not only his grapho-literacy, but his ability to avoid using it.

1. *The Texts*

In five passages within his epistles, Paul draws attention to the fact that he has signed the epistle himself and written a short greeting or oath. These texts are 1 Cor 16,21, Gal 6,11, Col 4,18, 2 Thess 3,17, and Phil 19, and are briefly presented here in canonical order⁽³⁾.

(1) *Inter alia*, see B. WITHERINGTON III, *The Paul Quest. The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus* (Downers Grove, IL 1998) 89-129.

(2) The Pauline authenticity of the texts does not affect the following argument. Even as deutero-Pauline epistles, Colossians and 2 Thessalonians would remain as evidence. That these epistles include the exact same formula in 1 Cor 16,21 demonstrates that their authors recognized the importance of asserting that Paul signed the epistle himself and replicated that claim. “Paul” will thus be used in this article in order to indicate the author of the epistle, even if that was not the apostle Paul.

(3) G.J. BAHR, “The Subscriptions in the Pauline Letters”, *JBL* 87 (1968) 27-41, suggests other passages that Paul may have written. E.R. RICHARDS, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul* (WUNT 2.42; Tübingen 1991) 189, claims, “Both [2 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians] probably have autographed postscripts” (see

Paul closes the first epistle to the church at Corinth with what Richards refers to as “a typical formula”⁽⁴⁾ in 1 Cor 16,21: “The greeting (is) in my hand, Paul’s” (ὁ ἄσπασμός τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου)⁽⁵⁾.

Gal 6,11 similarly calls attention to Paul’s authorship of the epistolary greeting, and peculiarly to either the size or form of his letters. Here Paul says, “See with what big letters I write to you in my own hand” (ἴδετε πηλίκους ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ). Paul’s “big letters” have caused no small amount of debate, which will be discussed shortly.

Prior to asking his readership to remember his afflictions, Col 4,18 contains the exact same phrase as 1 Cor 16,21: “The greeting (is) in my hand, Paul’s” (ὁ ἄσπασμός τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου).

Second Thessalonians 3,17 repeats this phrase verbatim as well: “The greeting (is) in my hand, Paul’s” (ὁ ἄσπασμός τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου). Significantly, however, 2 Thess 3,17 follows this stock phrase with an explicit statement on its purpose in the text as a method of authenticating not only this epistle but presumably all of them. Paul says, “This is a sign in each epistle; thus I write” (ὅ ἐστιν σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ οὕτως γράφω).

Finally, the short letter to Philemon states that it is from both Paul and Timothy (Phlm 1). In Phlm 19, however, Paul writes his oath (or “promissory note”)⁽⁶⁾ in his own handwriting. The passage reads: “I,

also 189, n. 281) and, on 190, n. 285, notes that the implication of 2 Thess 3,17 is “that all of his letters contained an autographed postscript whether explicitly mentioned or not” (cf. p. 174). The latter point is made also by A. DEISSMANN, *Light from the Ancient East*. The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World (London 1927) 166, n. 7 (continued on 167). M.L. Stirewalt, Jr. (*Paul, the Letter Writer* [Grand Rapids, MI 2003] 51, n. 57) claims, “The lack of notation of autograph and a clear subscription in Philippians tend to show Paul’s hand throughout the letter ...”. I am less confident that a case for the entirety of Philippians coming from the hand of Paul can be made from the evidence it lacks.

⁽⁴⁾ RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 173.

⁽⁵⁾ NRSV (“I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand”) is slightly misleading in that no verb appears in the Greek. For interpretive options with Παύλου, see M.J. HARRIS, *Colossians and Philemon* (Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI 1991) 215. I take it as a genitive of apposition, as does J. MURPHY-O’CONNOR, *Paul the Letter Writer*. His World, His Options, His Skills (GNS 41; Collegeville, PA 1995) 104.

⁽⁶⁾ E. LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*. A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1971) 204.

Paul, write in my hand: I will repay” (ἐγὼ Παῦλος ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ ἐγὼ ἀποτίσω).

Before proceeding, some preliminary observations on these five passages are in order. First, Paul’s use of his own handwriting implicitly highlights his use of an amanuensis for the rest of the writing task⁽⁷⁾. Though perhaps at first glance insignificant, this detail concerning Paul may reveal information about his Greek education and social status⁽⁸⁾.

Second, these passages demonstrate that Paul’s Greek education was (in the very least) sufficient enough that he could write formulaic greetings and short phrases in his text. Scholars have debated, however, whether Paul’s writing activity is limited to these passages specifically and I here mention two examples. First, there is disagreement over the precise content of the ἔγραψα of Gal 6,11. Bahr and Deissmann posit that Paul began writing at Gal 5,2 rather than 6,11⁽⁹⁾ while Guthrie and Turner suggest that the verb may refer to the full epistle⁽¹⁰⁾. Numerous scholars are against the idea that Gal 6,11 refers to the entire epistle⁽¹¹⁾, however, and Richards argues persuasively that one should not consider Paul’s handwriting to begin prior to his stating that he is now writing in his own hand⁽¹²⁾. A second example of disagreement over the boundaries of Paul’s writing is

(7) H.Y. GAMBLE, *Books and Readers in the Early Church. A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven 1995) 95-96; MURPHY-O’CONNOR, *Paul*, 7; RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 172; STIREWALT, *Paul*, 9. P.J. ACHTEMEIER, “*Omne verbum sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity”, *JBL* 109.1 (1990) 12, describes dictation as “the normal mode of composition of any writing”.

(8) The present study thus focuses upon Paul’s Greek education and leaves questions of Paul’s Hebrew and/or Aramaic linguistic abilities for another occasion. See, however, the short summary in C.J. ROETZEL, *Paul. The Man and the Myth* (Columbia 1998) 11-12.

(9) BAHR, “Subscriptions”, 35; DEISSMANN, *Light*, 166, n. 7 (continued on 167).

(10) D. GUTHRIE, *Galatians* (Century Bible Commentary new series; London 1969) 158; N. TURNER, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (Edinburgh 1965) 93.

(11) *Inter alia*, H.D. BETZ, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1979) 314, 314, n. 22; E. DE WITT BURTON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1921) 347-349; J.B. LIGHTFOOT, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* (London 1869) 217; A. OEPKE, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (THKNT 9; Berlin 1957) 157-158.

(12) RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 172-179.

Philemon. Some scholars see Paul as interrupting the work of the scribe in order to write himself in Phlm 19⁽¹³⁾. Lemaire, however, thinks that Paul penned the entirety of the epistle⁽¹⁴⁾. Occupying a middle ground, Harris notes that the autograph's location outside the end of the epistle is not necessarily evidence that Paul wrote its entirety, but also observes that one cannot rule out this possibility based on the brevity of the letter⁽¹⁵⁾. More recently, Arzt-Grabner has claimed the idiom in Phlm 19 (stating that one writes in one's own hand) does not decidedly clarify whether Paul used a secretary for the rest of the epistle one way or another⁽¹⁶⁾. He cites similar occurrences of the idiom in documentary papyri where no obvious change of scribal hand appears, and thus considers it more probable that Paul wrote all of Philemon than that he took over from the amanuensis at this point⁽¹⁷⁾. One can therefore certainly not rule out the possibility that Paul penned all of Philemon. Nevertheless, one can also not rule out the possibility that, along with passages such as Gal 6,11 and 2 Thess 3,17, Phlm 19 assumes that a reader could inspect the autograph and notice a particular style of handwriting that was different from the rest of the epistle and identifiable with Paul's. The important point for the present study is that Paul has grabbed the reed and written at least Phlm 19 himself. I will thus proceed from this fact and focus my study on it and the other four explicit statements of writing without speculating on what else in the epistle he may/could have also written.

As a third preliminary observation, and possibly in tension with the idea that he wrote all of Philemon, Paul draws attention to the "big letters" he writes in Gal 6,11. What does Paul's "big letters" signify? Explicitly rejecting the idea that the size of the letters reflects the importance of the words, Deismann considers Gal 6,11 to be the "clumsy, awkward writing" of an "artisan missionary" who is "no

⁽¹³⁾ J.D.G. DUNN, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 339 (also p. 289 in reference to Col 4,18); RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 178-179; R.McL. WILSON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Colossians and Philemon* (ICC; London 2005) 358.

⁽¹⁴⁾ A. LEMAIRE, "Writing and Writing Materials", *ABD* VI, 1006.

⁽¹⁵⁾ HARRIS, *Colossians and Philemon*, 273-274. Lohse (*Colossians and Philemon*, 204, n. 71) too, remains agnostic on the issue.

⁽¹⁶⁾ P. ARZT-GRABNER, *Philemon* (Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament 1; Göttingen 2003) 243.

⁽¹⁷⁾ ARZT-GRABNER, *Philemon*, 240-243 (entire discussion); 242 (probable that Paul wrote Philemon).

rigorous pedagogue" (18): "Between [the amanuensis'] fluent hand and that of Paul there was a pronounced difference The *large letters* naturally suggest that the explanation rather lies in the formal and external matter of calligraphy" (19). Again he claims, "The handwriting of the amanuensis of Gal. i. 1 – vi. 10 ... was probably cursive, and the autograph signature of St. Paul the stiff, heavy uncials of a manual labourer" (20). There are, however, numerous dissenters to this view (21). Betz claims *πηλικά γράμματα* should be interpreted neutrally as "large letters" rather than implying "clumsy" and that the large letters serve to "underscore the importance of what he has to say in these last words" (22). Similarly, Lightfoot claims the size of the letters "answers to the force of the apostle's convictions":

The language almost bursts with the surcharge of feeling. The very forms of the letters too bear witness to his intense earnestness. He writes in large bold characters to arrest the eye and rivet the mind" (23).

After considering a number of possibilities, including Paul's poor eyesight, a hand defect due to an actual crucifixion (24), and Paul's familiarity with Hebrew letters rather than Greek and thus reflecting that Paul was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews", George concludes: "All of these are intriguing possibilities, but none of them can be set forth with certainty" (25). In the very least, the weight of scholarly opinion is aligned against Deissmann's notion of a sloppily-writing Paul, as

(18) A. DEISSMANN, *Paul. A Study in Social and Religious History* (London 21926) 49; DEISSMANN, *Light*, 166, n. 7, 246; A. DEISSMANN, *Bible Studies. Contributions Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* (Edinburgh 21909) 348, respectively.

(19) DEISSMANN, *Bible Studies*, 348.

(20) DEISSMANN, *Light*, 174.

(21) In addition to those discussed below in the main text, see F.F. BRUCE, *The Epistle to the Galatians. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids 1982) 268; W.K.L. CLARKE, "St. Paul's 'Large Letters'", *ExpT* 24 (1912-1913) 285; J.S. CLEMENS, "St. Paul's Handwriting", *ExpT* 24 (1912-1913) 380; RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 181.

(22) BETZ, *Galatians*, 314.

(23) LIGHTFOOT, *Galatians*, 218, 65, respectively. So also BURTON, *Galatians*, 348. J.D.G. DUNN, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; London 1993) 335, claims Paul perhaps wrote "large enough for the reader to hold up so that the various congregations could read his words for themselves", which was also the suggestion of BRUCE, *Epistle to the Galatians*, 268.

(24) This is the suggestion of TURNER, *Grammatical Insights*, 94.

(25) T. GEORGE, *Galatians* (NAC 30; Nashville 1994) 432.

Matera observes, “There is general agreement among commentators that the reference to Paul’s large letters does not refer to their misshapen appearance, as Chrysostom thought, but simply to their size”⁽²⁶⁾. Perhaps one should conclude that Paul’s “big letters” serve as emphasis without specifying the precise nature of the emphasis. One should not disregard entirely, however, that the paucity of extant Greek writing that actually comes from the hand of Paul could suggest that his was an unpracticed hand, whether his “big letters” are a result of that fact or not. Importantly, the following argument is not dependent on one interpretation of Paul’s “big letters” in Gal 6,11 over another, and will offer another explanation for why little of Paul’s own handwriting remains. The present study now turns from the significance of Paul’s “big letters” to the significance of Paul writing in the first place.

2. *Previous Assessments of Paul Writing in His Epistles*

Scholars have accounted for the appearance of Paul’s own handwriting in a number of ways (which are not mutually exclusive). Some remark that Paul is adding a personal touch to the greeting of the epistle⁽²⁷⁾. Others see Paul as conforming to the epistolary norm of signing one’s name at the end of the epistle⁽²⁸⁾. Commenting on the addition of autographs to Greco-Roman friendship letters, Stowers combines these options:

This practice was like adding a signature to a typed letter. The apostle Paul does the same at the close of some letters in order to provide a personal touch⁽²⁹⁾.

Normally with reference to 2 Thess 3,17, some scholars suggest that Paul indeed signed his epistles as part of an epistolary norm, but

⁽²⁶⁾ F.J. MATERA, *Galatians* (Sacra Pagina 9; Collegeville, PA 1992) 229.

⁽²⁷⁾ M.M. THOMPSON, *Colossians and Philemon* (Two Horizons; Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 109.

⁽²⁸⁾ R.F. COLLINS, “‘I Command That This Letter Be Read’: Writing as a Manner of Speaking”, in *The Thessalonians Debate. Methodological Discord or Methodological Synthesis* (eds. K.P. DONFRIED – J. BEUTLER) (Grand Rapids, MI 2000) 329; R.Y.K. FUNG, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1988) 301; GEORGE, *Galatians*, 430; LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*, 177. Cf. also A. ROBERTSON – A. PLUMMER, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1911) 400, who mentions this epistolary practice but also thinks the signature would have authenticated the epistle since “the apostle’s handwriting would be known at Corinth”.

⁽²⁹⁾ S.K. STOWERS, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (LEC 5; Philadelphia, PA 1986) 61.

specify that the autograph was a method of authentication⁽³⁰⁾. For example, Richards claims, "It [2 Thess 3,17] probably was added to protect the Thessalonians from forgeries (2 Thes. 2:2)"⁽³¹⁾. This was not an uncommon practice, as later Cyprian will also ask his readers to inspect handwriting as a method of authentication⁽³²⁾. Earlier, Cicero had instructed Atticus to write letters for him in his name⁽³³⁾, and to lie to explain the absence of his authenticating mark:

If they notice the absence of my seal (*signum*) or handwriting (*manum*), please say that I have avoided using them owing to the sentries⁽³⁴⁾.

Attaching handwriting is, then, a common method for an author to authenticate his epistle, and its absence must sometimes be explained.

Alternatively (though sometimes also in conjunction with the idea that Paul's autographs serve an authenticating function), some scholars stress that Paul's own handwriting underscores the importance of what he has written, as noted in the above discussion of Gal 6,11. The precise importance being communicated is conceptualized in various ways. Regarding Gal 6,15, Sanders makes a general statement: "This is important to Paul. He wrote it in his own hand ..." ⁽³⁵⁾. Wilson claims that the fact that Paul writes Phlm 19 shows that it was "a serious and binding commitment" ⁽³⁶⁾. Dunn notes that Col 4,18 "must count in favour of the view that Paul himself actually held the stylus for these final words", and that this "reinforces the effect of the letter" by presenting a personal touch⁽³⁷⁾. Dunn also suggests that in Phlm 19 Paul "is pulling out all the stops and putting the full weight of his

⁽³⁰⁾ BETZ, *Galatians*, 314; BURTON, *Galatians*, 347-348; RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 175; STIREWALT, *Paul*, 54; WITHERINGTON, *Paul Quest*, 109. DUNN, *Epistles*, 289, correctly observes that this verse "adds an important twist to the issue of the pseudonymity of 2 Thessalonians". For a recent discussion, see K.P. DONFRIED, *Paul, Thessalonica, and Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI 2002) 54-56, who notes that this verse causes problems for defenders and opponents of Pauline authenticity alike.

⁽³¹⁾ RICHARDS, *Secretary*, 174.

⁽³²⁾ Cyprian, *Epistle* 9.

⁽³³⁾ *Inter alia*, Cicero, *Att.* 11.2, 3, 5, 7.

⁽³⁴⁾ Cicero, *Att.* 11.2 (WINSTEDT, LCL).

⁽³⁵⁾ E.P. SANDERS, *Paul. A Very Short Introduction* (Very Short Introduction 42; Oxford 1991) 70.

⁽³⁶⁾ WILSON, *Critical*, 359.

⁽³⁷⁾ DUNN, *Epistles*, 289.

personal standing behind his words”⁽³⁸⁾. The question that remains, however, is: How did Paul holding the reed reinforce his point? That is, can one be more specific about how personal handwriting would place Paul’s “full weight” behind his points and, more broadly, his epistles?

The above suggestions are all plausible explanations for why Paul wrote in his epistles with his own hand. This article does not intend to contradict any one of them, but rather will move these observations one step further by adding an important nuance. I here suggest that these passages in the Pauline corpus functioned rhetorically in a much more significant manner than simply highlighting an “importance” or merely conforming to an epistolary norm, be it a signature or a method of authentication or both. Paul’s inclusion of his own handwriting in some of his epistles underscored not just what Paul said but who Paul was and why he was in a position to say it — they demonstrate that Paul was capable of writing, what I here refer to as “grapho-literacy”.

II. Grapho-Literacy in the Ancient World

In the world of the apostle Paul, illiteracy was the rule of the day. Thus, to acknowledge Paul as literate at all is to place him among the elite stratus of first-century Jewish (and Greco-Roman) culture. Further, even amongst those who could read, not everyone could write. Both of these realities have recently been proven demonstrably by the studies of Raffaella Cribiore on the Greco-Roman school papyri of ancient Egypt⁽³⁹⁾. To these issues I now turn.

1. *General Low Literacy*

William Harris’ *Ancient Literacy* famously asserted a generalized 10% literacy rate for the ancient world⁽⁴⁰⁾. More recent works on

⁽³⁸⁾ DUNN, *Epistles*, 339.

⁽³⁹⁾ Though one must leave open the possibility that education differed in small manners from one geographical location to another, and thus not assume that the Greco-Roman Egyptian evidence is entirely illustrative of Roman Judea or elsewhere, the uniform nature of education throughout the Empire is now widely recognized. See W.V. HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, MA 1989) 281; M.L.W. LAISTNER, *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire* (Ithaca, GA 1951) 25; T. MORGAN, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge Classical Studies; Cambridge 1998) 44-45, 66-67.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 22.

Roman Judea and early Christianity have affirmed Harris’ estimate for these respective communities and, in the former case, suggested that 10% may be generous⁽⁴¹⁾. Importantly, however, “literacy” is not a well-defined category but rather a spectrum (or spectrums), and thus it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of “literate competency(ies)”. One reason for this is that an individual could hold different literate competencies in different languages, much like individuals do today⁽⁴²⁾. Another reason is the presence of individuals that can be described as “semi-literates”⁽⁴³⁾. These are individuals who are literate enough to participate in the local economy or carry on their trade⁽⁴⁴⁾, but could not, for example, read a page of the *Iliad* if asked or write a personal letter. In a primarily agrarian society, it was simply (financially) impractical for parents to send a child through the various levels of pedagogy that would eventually allow him (or, more rarely, her) to cite Homer or compose writing. Not only would this lose a worker for the family, the child’s life likely would never present an opportunity for him (or her) to use that skill⁽⁴⁵⁾. A third reason to speak of “literate competencies” rather than strictly “literacy” or “illiteracy” is that the two aspects of a literate education — reading and writing — were neither equally taught nor learned.

2. Reading Versus Writing in the School Papyri

Like moderns who consider reading and writing a unity, historians of ancient education have often failed to distinguish between reading

⁽⁴¹⁾ Jewish context: C. HEZSER, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (TSAJ 81; Tübingen 2001) 496. Christian context: GAMBLE, *Books and Readers*, 5.

⁽⁴²⁾ Consider especially the comments of GAMBLE, *Books and Readers*, 3: “A Christian in first-century Palestine might have been thoroughly literate in Aramaic, largely literate in Hebrew, semiliterate in Greek, and illiterate in Latin, while a Christian in Rome in the second century might have been literate in Latin and semiliterate in Greek but ignorant of Aramaic and Hebrew”.

⁽⁴³⁾ On “semi-literates”, see HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 5; H.C. YOUTIE, “Βραδέως γράφων: Between Literacy and Illiteracy”, *GRBS* 12.2 (1971) 239-261; repr. in *Scriptiunculae II* (Amsterdam 1973).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Thus, “semi-literacy” is also known as “craftsman’s literacy” (HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 7-8 and throughout) or “tradesman’s literacy” (J.P. MEIER, *A Marginal Jew. Rethinking the Historical Jesus* [New York 1991] I, 262).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ M. BAR-ILAN, “Illiteracy in the Land of Israel in the First Centuries C.E.”, *Essays in the Social Scientific Study of Judaism and Jewish Society* (eds. S. FISHBANE – S. SCHOENFELD – A. GOLDSCHLAEGER) (New York 1992) II, 55; H.Y. GAMBLE, “Literacy and Book Culture”, *DNTB*, 645; HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 30.

and writing, specifically in conceptions of pedagogical method. For example, Marrou claims, "Writing was taught in the same way as reading" ⁽⁴⁶⁾. Not all scholars agree, however, on the essential unity of reading and writing acquisition, and alongside some older studies, more recent ones have begun to stress that one cannot equate proficiency in one with proficiency in the other ⁽⁴⁷⁾. Harris observes, "In some cultures non-writing readers, those possessed of one skill but not the other, have made up a broad spectrum" ⁽⁴⁸⁾. Cribiore's work on the school papyri of Greco-Roman Egypt has perhaps dealt the "death blow" to the view that reading and writing were similarly taught and learned ⁽⁴⁹⁾. Though her studies deserve more detailed attention than the present essay can offer, I would here like to invoke her conclusions

⁽⁴⁶⁾ H.I. MARROU, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (London 1956) 155.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ See A. EDERSHEIM, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*. Updated Edition (Peabody, MA 1994), 111-112, 122; R.L. FOX, "Literacy and Power in Early Christianity", *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (eds. A.K. BOWMAN – G. WOOLF) (Cambridge 1994) 128-129; M.D. GOODMAN, "Texts, Scribes, and Power in Roman Judea", in *Literacy and Power*, 99-100; HEZSER, *Jewish Literacy*, 474-495; M.C.A. MACDONALD, "Literacy in an Oral Environment", *Writing and Ancient Near Eastern Society*. Papers in Honour of Alan R. Millard (eds. P. BIENKOWSKI – C. MEE – E. SLATER) (JSOTSup 426; London 2005) 52-56, 65; A. MILLARD, *Reading and Writing in the Time of Jesus* (Biblical Seminar 69; London 2001) 154. Morgan (*Literate Education*, 92-93) moves from this observation to argue that, since reading was taught before writing, the educational environment was inherently hierarchical, since a student would always "be able to understand more than he could articulate for himself" (93).

⁽⁴⁸⁾ HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 5. In the same paragraph, Harris offers this caveat: "We shall certainly have to be on guard for the possibility that the difference between reading and writing levels was actually very great among the Greeks and Romans. There is, however, no especial reason to think that those who could truly read and truly *not* write were numerous" (emphasis original). However, he alludes to the difference between the two again when he claims that the fact that there was much reading material in the ancient world "must not lead us to the assumption that the majority of city-dwellers were able to read for themselves . . . *still less to the assumption that they could write*" (14; emphasis added; for similar statements see 176, 275, 276, 302). MEIER (*A Marginal Jew* I, 255) reads Harris along these lines, and a number of other scholars implicitly reference the difference between reading and writing in the ancient world with similar statements. For example, GAMBLE, "Literacy and Book Culture", 645; LEMAIRE, "Writing", 6.1005; T. THATCHER, *Why John Wrote a Gospel*. Jesus – Memory – History (Louisville, KY 2006) xv.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ R. CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics of the Mind*. Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt (Princeton 2001). This text is a revision of her earlier *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (ASP 36; Atlanta, GA 1996).

regarding two issues that illuminate the previous Pauline passages: (1) the stage of literate education at which individuals learned to write their names; and (2) the importance of demonstrating that ability.

Most children in the ancient world received no education beyond what their parents taught them at home, and here one must keep in mind the 10% general literacy rate as an indication of how many parents were literate enough to teach their children. Educational opportunities outside the home were dependent upon population, proximity to an urban environment, availability of teachers, and (perhaps above all) the financial resources of the family. Those few who were able to attend a formal school setting, however, have left important clues indicating how they learned to read and write. Scholars have had some idea of this process through ancient educational theorists who offer detail on the pedagogical process. For example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century CE) provides an example, and it is here worth including the long quotation since he references the entire pedagogical spectrum, from initial instruction to professional writing:

When we are taught to read, first we learn by heart the names of the letters, then their shapes and their values, then, in the same way, the syllables and their effects, and finally words and their properties And when we have acquired knowledge of these things, we begin to write and read (γράφειν τε καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν), syllable by syllable and slowly at first. It is only when a considerable lapse of time has implanted firmly in our minds the forms of the words that we execute them with the utmost ease, and we read through any book that is given to us unflinching and with incredible confidence and speed. It must be assumed that something of this kind happens with accomplished professional writers when they come to deal with literary composition and the harmonious arrangement of clauses⁽⁵⁰⁾.

According to this theory, termed the “syllabic method”, literate education followed a clear pattern in which syllable recognition formed the initial stages⁽⁵¹⁾. It is significant here that Dionysius mentions compositional writing only in the context of professional writers.

According to Cribiore, however, the school papyri demonstrate a slightly different pedagogical agenda, which she terms the “copying method”. She says,

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On Literary Composition* (USHER, LCL). This reference is from 2.229 of the Loeb edition. See also Manilius, *Astronomica* 2.755-61.

⁽⁵¹⁾ CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics*, 169.

The school exercises show that at the same time that students were learning to juggle the letters of the alphabet, they had to apply their new expertise by learning to write their personal names.

Thus, signature literacy — i.e., the ability to write one's name — was actually a nascent stage of grapho-literacy, but one with important implications for the majority of students who would not proceed further, to which I will shortly turn⁽⁵²⁾. Under the “copying method” of literate education, after this stage students had to copy texts manually that they were incapable of reading, as evidenced by their inability to correct mistakes⁽⁵³⁾. Outside of the school papyri, Quintilian⁽⁵⁴⁾ and Seneca⁽⁵⁵⁾ attest the copying method with remarks that allude to the fact that writing instruction occurred after introduction to letters but prior to the building of syllables and/or reading comprehension. Writing in these instances, then, amounts to letter recognition and formation, without the ability to understand those letters as constituent parts of larger language units of syllables, words, or sentences⁽⁵⁶⁾. That these students were forced to copy texts letter by letter earned the name of “slow writers” (βραδέως γράφων/γράφουσα) for those who never advanced beyond this limited literacy, which can be described as “probably on the verge of illiteracy”⁽⁵⁷⁾. The early Christian author of

(52) CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics*, 167. On p. 168, Cribiore includes a photograph of an ostrakon where a schoolboy has written his name and then practiced the first four letters of the alphabet. Cribiore's study provides evidence for the speculation of BAR-ILAN, “Illiteracy”, 56, n. 4, regarding signature literacy as an early stage in education.

(53) CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics*, 169. See also her *Writing*, 151: “These students were not able to read”.

(54) Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.1.27: “As soon as the child has begun to know the shapes of the various letters, it will be no bad thing to have them cut as accurately as possible upon a board, so that the pen may be guided along the grooves” (BUTLER, LCL).

(55) Seneca, *Ep.* 94.15: “Their fingers are held and guided by others so that they may follow the outlines of the letters” (GUMMERE, LCL).

(56) Eleven years prior to Cribiore's initial study of the school papyri, J.L. Crenshaw (“Education in Ancient Israel”, *JBL* 104 [1985] 607) noted that “numerous errors in the [Egyptian] school copies survived, which suggests that learning did not always accompany copying, inasmuch as students seem often not to have understood the text”.

(57) CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 6. Harris (*Ancient Literacy*, 276) inappropriately refers to “slow writers” as an “intermediate group”. This group more plausibly reflects those individuals whose education did not progress to the intermediate stage. Harris may here be generally referring to these individuals as “intermediate” in the sense of semi-literate. For further discussion of “slow writers”, see CRIBIORE,

Shepherd of Hermas was a "slow writer". Though the command of *Vis.* 2.4.3 presumes he can read, Hermas must copy letter by letter since he cannot identify the syllables (τὰς συλλαβὰς), even if writing books⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Papyrologists have criticized Cribiore's methodological basis for identifying the "syllabic" and "copying" methods as two separate instructional techniques⁽⁵⁹⁾. In her later work, Cribiore acknowledges the possibility that teachers could have practiced both simultaneously while advancing students with varying competencies through the different stages of literate education⁽⁶⁰⁾. However, Cribiore has demonstrated conclusively that, in the ancient world, ability in one literate skill does not automatically imply ability in the other and that compositional writing dwelled at the high end of the pedagogical spectrum, where few students ever progressed. That is, the ancient context was certainly familiar with individuals such as the town clerk Petaus (discussed immediately below), who could write a short formula but was not literate enough to know when he had made a mistake in his copying.

Of the minority of children who were educated, most did not progress far through the pedagogical system, and thus were

Writing, 116-117, 150-152; *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 163-164, 176-177; HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 254, 254, n. 419, 276-277, 318; T.J. KRAUS, " 'Slow Writers' — ΒΡΑΔΕΩΣ ΓΡΑΦΟΝΤΕΣ: What, How Much, and How Did They Write?", (ID.) *Ad Fontes*. Original Manuscripts and Their Significance for Studying Early Christianity — Selected Essays (Leiden 2007) 131-147; YOUTIE, "Βραδέως γράφων", 239-261.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Herm. *Vis.* 2.4.3 (read); 2.1.4 (letter by letter); 2.1.4 and 2.4.3 (writing "little" books). One may compare here with Cicero's scribes (*librarii*) Spintharo and Tiro, discussed in *Att.* 13.25. Spintharo has attained a slightly higher gradation of writing ability than Hermas, since he can follow dictation syllable by syllable. Even more advanced, however, is Tiro, who can follow whole sentences. For discussion of Hermas and Christian copyists, see K. HAINES-EITZEN, *Guardians of Letters*. Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature (New York 2000) 36-37.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ See especially K. VÖSSING, "Schreiben lernen, ohne lesen zu können? Zur Methode des antiken Elementarunterrichts," *ZPE* 123 (1998) 121-125. Other reviews of Cribiore's work are H. MAEHLER, review of *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* by Raffaella Cribiore, *Gnomon* 75 (2003) 229-235; K. VÖSSING, review of *Gymnastics of the Mind* by Raffaella Cribiore, *Gnomon* 75 (2003) 613-616.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ CRIBIORE, *Gymnastics*, 176-177. For her discussion of various ancient educational theorists and their descriptions of learning to write, see CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 139-152.

characterized by a limited writing capacity. That limited capacity, however, had significant repercussions. From that point on in an individual's life he or she would at least be ranked among those who could sign his or her own name on documents, and thus participate, even if marginally, in literate culture.

When teachers stressed penmanship among students, assigning them writing practice at a very early stage, they intended to take best advantage of the time at their disposal to make them part of the class of those who "did know letters". Thus basic copying skills and the ability to produce a signature were probably considered more desirable in the first place than the ability to read properly, especially when balanced against the time and effort needed to produce such result⁽⁶¹⁾.

The importance for being able to demonstrate membership in the class of those who "know letters" cannot be overemphasized for those ancients in positions of even marginal power. One may here cite the famous Petaus, a town clerk (κωμογραμματεὺς) who could "pass himself off as literate" by reproducing letters mechanically even though he could not read anything beyond his own name⁽⁶²⁾. That this was the case is revealed by a papyrus he used to practice his formula Πεταῦς κωμογρα(μ)ματεὺς ἐπιδέδωκα ("I, Petaus, town clerk, have submitted")⁽⁶³⁾. Once he made a mistake while practicing (omission of the initial *epsilon* of the verb at line 5), the mistake repeats itself⁽⁶⁴⁾. That is, Petaus cannot read enough to know he was repeating the mistake; he was simply copying the previous line. Petaus' own writing abilities are all the more interesting because, when called upon to give an opinion on another town clerk who had been charged with illiteracy, he claimed boldly that of course the clerk was literate, for he had

⁽⁶¹⁾ CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 152. See also HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy*, 251-252. Cf. MURPHY-O'CONNOR, *Paul*, 8: "In the Greco-Roman world all who went to school learned to write, and were trained by being obliged to take down dictation". This is (in the least) a gross overstatement.

⁽⁶²⁾ CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 151; *Gymnastics*, 172.

⁽⁶³⁾ *P.Petaus* 121 (P. Köln inv. 328). The papyrus appears on R. BAGNALL, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (Approaching the Ancient World; London 1995) xiii (discussed on 24). An excellent discussion is that of YOUTIE, "Βραδέως γράφων", 239-241.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ T.J. Kraus ("[I]lteracy in Non-Literary Papyri from Graeco-Roman Egypt: Further Aspects to the Educational Ideal in Ancient Literary Sources", [ID.] *Ad Fontes*, 119-120) gives a fuller description of the numerous mistakes in *P.Petaus* 121.

signed the papers passing through his office⁽⁶⁵⁾. Youtie notes the irony of Petaus’ defence of the other town clerk:

“He was in effect offering a defence not only of Ischyriion, against whom the accusation had been directed, but also of himself and his own procedure”⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Though Petaus is not literate enough to correct a simple mistake, he certainly considers himself literate.

Against such a literary landscape, where few could write but those who could found it to be a significant accomplishment, it is now appropriate to consider the Pauline passages that call attention to Paul’s ability to write τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ. For the sake of clarity, I note here that an individual such as Petaus is important for understanding Paul’s demonstrations of grapho-literacy not because Paul’s literate competency was comparable with Petaus’ — Paul clearly had progressed pedagogically further — but rather because Petaus’ example displays the social significance of using what literate skills one had.

III. A Grapho-Literate Paul

Cribiore discusses the phenomenon of attaching an epistolary greeting in one’s own hand as evidence that one of the education process’ primary goals was simply to enable students to participate in literate culture⁽⁶⁷⁾. She states:

There can be no doubt that inhabitants of Graeco-Roman Egypt preferred to sign documents and letters in their clumsy, belaboured characters than be considered among illiterates. It was better to possess and exhibit the skill in limited and imperfect degree, however difficult and unpleasant to the eye their efforts were⁽⁶⁸⁾.

This observation may pertain to interpretations of Paul’s “big letters” in Gal 6,11. While the material evidence of unskilled writers

⁽⁶⁵⁾ For more on Petaus, see HAINES-EITZEN, *Guardians of Letters*, 27-28; KRAUS, “(Il)literacy”, 119-121; KRAUS, “Slow Writers”, 131-133; MACDONALD, “Literacy”, 53; E.G. TURNER, *Greek Papyri. An Introduction* (Oxford 1968) 83; H.C. YOUTIE, “ΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣ: An Aspect of Greek Society in Egypt”, in *Scriptiunculae II*, 621-622; repr. from *HSCP* 75 (1971); YOUTIE, “Βραδέως γράφων”, 239-244.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ YOUTIE, “Βραδέως γράφων”, 239-240.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 4-5, 7, 10.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ CRIBIORE, *Writing*, 10.

and “slow writers” does not prove that Paul’s letters were likewise unskilled, it does call into question the current robust rejection of Deissmann’s suggestion about Paul’s “big letters”. For the present study, however, the critical point is that, whether or not Paul’s writing is less than calligraphic, it is his.

In this sense, Cribiore’s observation equally illuminates the other four Pauline passages as well, as it draws attention to the importance, in the ancient world, of demonstrating the literate ability one possessed. If an individual could do nothing more than sign his name, he could locate himself within that minority of the society that was educated, even if he was clearly not as educated as others. That is, it was better to be on the bottom rung of the literacy ladder (and prove it) than it was not to be on the literacy ladder at all (and prove that). When Paul mentions that he writes with his own hand, therefore, he was not only pointing out how important a particular point or section of the epistle was to him. Though he may have been doing that amongst other things (and likely was), he was simultaneously making a point about himself — proving to the church he is addressing that he is an educated member of society. This was an important point to make, and especially when issues of textual interpretation were at stake and “the bulk of the membership [of Paul’s churches] was nonelite [i.e., illiterate], as 1 Cor 1,26 indicates”⁽⁶⁹⁾. Drawing attention to his educated status, however, was perhaps not the only rhetorical function of proving his grapho-literacy.

Literacy intertwined with status in a multifaceted manner in the ancient world. One aspect of this complex relationship concerns displays of grapho-literacy such as Paul’s. For persons of prestige, one mark of status was the ability to demonstrate literacy but simultaneously avoid its use⁽⁷⁰⁾. “One might almost say that there was a direct correlation between the social standing that guaranteed literacy and the means to avoid writing”⁽⁷¹⁾. (A rough modern analogy to this phenomenon would be the manner in which the über-rich may employ chauffeurs — they could drive themselves, but their ability to pay

⁽⁶⁹⁾ J.S. KLOPPENBORG VERBIN, *Excavating Q*. The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel (Edinburgh 2000) 167.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Likewise with reading. See ACHTEMEIER, “*Omne verbum sonat*”, 16, who cites Pliny, *Epistulae* 3.5.15. In this passage, Pliny the Younger describes his uncle Pliny the Elder as having a servant ready to read to him (or take dictation) even while bathing.

⁽⁷¹⁾ BAGNALL, *Reading Papyri*, 25.

someone else to do that task is a sign of their status and/or wealth.) The first-century BCE author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* disparages the copying of full texts:

The laborious is not necessarily the excellent. There are many things requiring labour which you would not necessarily boast of having done — unless, to be sure, you thought it a glorious feat to have transcribed by your own hand whole dramas or speeches! ⁽⁷²⁾.

Thus, one finds that many of the grapho-literate individuals in the ancient world employed slaves or freedmen who had been trained as copyists ⁽⁷³⁾. The use of copyists, via one’s own means or patronage ⁽⁷⁴⁾, displayed that one had the ability to avoid the menial task of writing. This does not mean that rhetoricians, procurators, rabbis, or Pharisees did not compose their own letters and writings from time to time ⁽⁷⁵⁾. They most certainly did, as demonstrations of this literacy were critical to their authority, as it was critical even for Petaus — only a town clerk — to demonstrate his limited abilities. Significant in this respect is that the author of the *Rhetorica* does not disparage compositional writing or epistolary writing, but the rote copying of entire works. Quintilian (first century CE) shows how different gradations of writing were regarded as status symbols:

The art of writing well and quickly [i.e., shorthand] is not unimportant for our purpose, though it is generally disregarded by persons of quality. Writing is of the utmost importance in the study which we have under consideration and by its means alone can true and deeply rooted proficiency be obtained. But a sluggish pen delays our thoughts, while an unformed and illiterate hand cannot be deciphered, a circumstance which necessitates another wearisome task, namely the dictation of what we have written to a copyist. We shall therefore at all times and in all places, and above all when we are writing private letters to our friends, find a gratification in the thought that we have not neglected even this accomplishment ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

⁽⁷²⁾ *Rhet. Her.* 4.4.6 (CAPLAN, LCL).

⁽⁷³⁾ Many, perhaps most, early Christian copyists were slaves or freedmen. See HAINES-EITZEN, *Guardians of Letters*, 21–40.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ According to Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.23, Ambrose was a patron of Origen, providing short-hand writers, copyists, and calligraphers for him. Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 61, also notes this fact.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ BAGNALL, *Reading Papyri*, 25. See also the ca. 400 CE carving of a Roman vicar in the act of writing his name, even though scribes attend him on either side, in J. NATANSON, *Early Christian Ivories* (London 1953), figure 8.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.1.28–29 (BUTLER, LCL).

According to Quintilian, writing is disparaged by some, but the ability to write epistles is prized and an important intellectual exercise. This reflects the point made earlier, that it is important that a person of status be able to write, but have a copyist at hand when it becomes irksome⁽⁷⁷⁾.

That grapho-literacy is simultaneously indicative of and antithetical to status in the thoughts of the author of the *Rhetorica* and Quintilian sheds further light on the passages where Paul highlights his own handwriting. Implicitly, these verses witness not just to Paul's grapho-literate competency, but also to the fact that he is important enough to be able to avoid its use if he desires. These verses thus say — again, implicitly — to Paul's audience (most of whom would not be able to write)⁽⁷⁸⁾: "Look, I can write, but I can avoid doing so. Most of you can do neither, so listen to me".

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* * *

Paul clearly found it beneficial to use an amanuensis when composing epistles in Greek⁽⁷⁹⁾. This in itself does not set Paul apart from other Jewish leaders, as even Josephus found that he needed help when composing in Greek⁽⁸⁰⁾. Hezser's comments on Josephus are

(77) HAINES-EITZEN, *Guardians of Letters*, 39, says, "It goes without saying that writers such as Jerome, Rufinus, and Augustine had plenty of uses for copyists". See also R. BAUCKHAM, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*. The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony (Grand Rapids, MI 2006) 359-361; HEZSER, *Jewish Literacy*, 474-476; R.S. KRAEMER, "Women's Authorship of Jewish and Christian Literature in the Greco-Roman Period", *Women Like This*. New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World (ed. A.-J. LEVINE) (Atlanta, GA 1991) 227; MACDONALD, "Literacy", 65 (referring to medieval England). Note that 4 Ezra (=2 Esd) 14.50 refers to Ezra as "scribe of the knowledge of the Most High" (NRSV) even though 14.42 makes clear that Ezra himself did not actually write, but rather copyists took dictation.

(78) This is not to claim that Paul's audience was completely illiterate. For one thing, Paul clearly presumed that at least one person (or his carrier) would be able to read. For another, as emphasized at the beginning of this article, literacy existed in gradations. It is safe to assume, however, that if Paul's churches were similar to the rest of the culture, the vast majority of his audience would have been incapable of writing and found Paul's ability to write to be significant.

(79) For a thorough study of the amanuensis in Paul, see RICHARDS, *Secretary*; and his *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing*. Secretaries, Composition and Collection (Downers Grove 2004).

(80) Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.9, 51. See also Josephus, *Ant.* 20.12.1, where Josephus refers to his Greek education.

apropos here in light of the previous discussion of Paul's Greek abilities:

Josephus should probably be seen as an example of those upper-class Jews who had achieved a relatively high level of Greek education, being able to read and discuss Greek literature, although not able to write a faultless and stylistically sophisticated Greek without outside help⁽⁸¹⁾.

The primary focus of this study has not been Paul's dependence upon an amanuensis, however, but rather has concerned his motives for breaking into the work of the amanuensis in order to demonstrate his own writing abilities. When Paul signs his own name and writes the formulaic statement "the greeting is in my hand" or an oath ("I will repay"), he demonstrates both his identity as an educated individual who "knows letters" (and Greek ones at that) and that he is a person of true prestige — able to write, but able to avoid it as well and have an amanuensis write the bulk of the epistle.

In terms of material evidence for his writing ability in Greek, the apostle has left us an admittedly meagre corpus of "actual" Pauline writing (as opposed to "Pauline" writing produced by the hand of an amanuensis). However, while keeping in mind that lack of demonstration was not necessarily indicative of lack of ability (though at times it was), one may hazard a comment on Paul's training in Greek based on the evidence we have. If Paul's use of an amanuensis is due to the fact that he can write nothing more than short greetings and his name, this would suggest that his education in Greek was, in the least, adequate but not protracted. Since he penned greetings (i.e., not only formulae) and therefore was capable of at least a limited degree of compositional writing, Paul was more proficient than a "slow-writer" in Greek and certainly more advanced than Petaus, who had to copy line by line and was thus incapable of even a small degree of compositional writing. If Paul wrote all of Philemon, this would set him even further apart from a slow-writer. Nonetheless, there is likely truth in the estimation of Deissmann that "Paul preferred to dictate his letters; writing [at least in Greek] was not particularly easy for him"⁽⁸²⁾. Composing a greeting, or even Philemon, was not the same as composing the entirety of Romans or the Corinthian Correspondence, and Paul sought the help of a professional for lengthier tasks in the *lingua franca*, much the same as Josephus.

⁽⁸¹⁾ HEZSER, *Jewish Literacy*, 91.

⁽⁸²⁾ DEISSMANN, *Paul*, 49. See also his *Light*, 166, n. 7, 174, 246.

To what extent this competency level is reflective of his training under Gamaliel (Acts 22,3) or his Diasporan hometown of Tarsus, or both, however, is not entirely clear⁽⁸³⁾. Combined with an everyday immersion in a Greek-speaking culture, one need posit little beyond the initial stages of literate education in order to account for the level of grapho-literate competency in Greek that Paul displays in the aforementioned passages of explicit writing. However, while Paul may not appear to have travelled far enough down the Greek pedagogical path to be able to compose lengthy and intricate texts, what grapho-literacy in Greek he had would have placed him in the top echelon of Jewish society (in terms of literacy). More importantly, this is something he wanted his audience to know.

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SUMMARY

Recent research in the school papyri of Egypt, especially Oxyrhynchus, has illuminated our understanding of the pedagogical process in the Greco-Roman world. Particularly interesting in this respect is the acquisition and social function of grapho-literacy (i.e., the ability to compose writing). Since few were literate, and of those few, fewer could read than could write, understanding how one gained grapho-literacy, who gained grapho-literacy, and how that literacy was employed in day to day life shines new light on passages such as 1 Cor 16,21, Gal 6,11, Col 4,18, 2 Thess 3,17, and Phlm 19. In these passages, Paul draws attention to the fact that he has personally written in the text. This paper will argue that these passages are not merely interesting asides, but rather significantly heighten the rhetorical force of the text. They draw attention not only to Paul's grapho-literacy, but also to his ability to avoid using it.

⁽⁸³⁾ G.F. Moore (*Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era. The Age of the Tannaim* [Cambridge 1927-1930] I, 322) claims "Hellenistic Jews" (by which he means those outside Palestine and Babylonia) were taught the scriptures in Greek. Likewise, M. HENGEL, *The Pre-Christian Paul* (London 1991), posits that Paul would have received a Greek-speaking Jewish elementary education consisting of the LXX (38; and thus Greek was his mother tongue), but that he returned to Jerusalem as an adolescent, where he honed his oratorical skills in Greek-speaking synagogues (58). However, MacDonald ("Literacy", 72, n. 72, 73) notes the lack of evidence for Jewish Greek education in the Diaspora. Hezser (*Jewish Literacy*, 90) observes that Josephus "is the only Jew who explicitly describes the way he learned Greek and received an education". See Josephus, *Ant.* 20.12.1.

ANIMADVERSIONES

Resurrection and Biblical Tradition: Pseudo-Ezekiel Reconsidered ⁽¹⁾

Ezek 37,1-14 comprises a vision of return from exile and resuscitation of the house of Israel in terms of revivification in a valley of dry bones. The biblical narrative, as we encounter it in the Masoretic Text, the majority of Septuagint manuscripts and a Masada biblical manuscript ⁽²⁾, makes the point that the dry bones symbolically stand for the whole house of Israel (Ezek 37,11) which will be joined together again. The symbolical story is related in Ezek 37,1-10, while Ezek 37,11-14 explain this story in relation to the whole house of Israel as prophecy of return to the land of Israel and settlement in the land.

While the biblical text of Ezekiel 37 has been taken to carry a metaphorical sense, one case of manuscript evidence and several cases of later interpretation in Jewish and Christian texts concern eschatological reading of Ezekiel's symbolical language ⁽³⁾. In Papyrus 967 of the Septuagint, Ezekiel 37 comes after Ezekiel 39 and directly precedes chapter 40-48. The evaluation of this manuscript evidence and its different order of text led Johan Lust to formulate the hypothesis that Ezekiel 37 did originally figure in an eschatological setting, while the Masoretic Text would reflect a de-eschatologising tendency in this respect ⁽⁴⁾. If this different order of text in Papyrus 967 represents an early literary edition of Ezekiel ⁽⁵⁾, this could

⁽¹⁾ This essay is a reworked version of the paper which the author presented at the Qumran Program Unit of the Society of Biblical Literature 2007 Annual Meeting on 19 November 2007 in San Diego.

⁽²⁾ MasEzek comprises the Hebrew text of Ezek 35,11-15; 36,1-11.13-14.17-35; 37,1-16.28; 38,1-4.7-8. Qumran fragments of Ezekiel (1Q9 (1QEzek), 3Q1 (3QEzek), 4Q73-75 (4QEzek*), 11Q4 (11QEz)) do not preserve (parts of) the text of Ezekiel 37. On the combined Hebrew evidence for the book of Ezekiel in general, cf. M. ABEGG – P.W. FLINT – E. ULRICH, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible. The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (San Francisco 1999) 407: "All of them and the traditional Masoretic Text fairly uniformly attest the same textual tradition".

⁽³⁾ See 4 Macc 18,17; *Apocr.Ezek.*; *Sib. Or.* 2.221-226 and 4.179-82; *Barn.* 12,1; *Apoc.Pet.* 4.7-9.

⁽⁴⁾ J. LUST, "Ezekiel 36-40 in the Oldest Greek Manuscript", *CBQ* 43 (1981) 517-533. Recently, ID., "Ezekiel's Utopian Expectations", in A. HILHORST, É. PUECH, and E.J.C. TIGCHELAAR (eds.), *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez* (JSJSup 122; Leiden 2007) 403-419 has reaffirmed the argument of MT Ezekiel as later re-interpretation as compared to the Old Greek version of Ezekiel in Papyrus 967.

⁽⁵⁾ S.S. SCATOLINI APÓSTOLO, "Ezek 36, 37, 38 and 39 in Papyrus 967 as Pre-Text for Re-Reading Ezekiel", *Interpreting Translation. Studies on the LXX and Ezekiel in Honour of Johan Lust* (eds. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – M. VERVENNE) (BETL 192; Leuven 2005) 331-357 leaves this matter open to debate. Cf. E. TOV, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis – Assen 2001), 333-334 who distinguishes between MT, Targum, Peshitta,

signify that the eschatological dimension to Ezekiel 37 already played a part in the compositional history of the book of Ezekiel.

The Qumran *Pseudo-Ezekiel* composition, known to a broader circle of scholars since the late 1980s and officially published in 2001⁽⁶⁾, has added important early Jewish evidence for a reading of Ezekiel 37 in eschatological terms of resurrection. The question of how reading and interpretation interact merits further study with regard to *Pseudo-Ezekiel*.

Much attention has hitherto focused on manuscript 385, *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a, from Qumran cave 4⁽⁷⁾. Fragment 2 of this manuscript provides the most extensively preserved introductory setting for an eschatological reading of Ezekiel 37. Other much-discussed fragments 3 and 4 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a are unparalleled in the other manuscripts, numbered b through e (4Q386 (4QpsEzek^b), 4Q385b (4QpsEzek^c), 4Q388 (4QpsEzek^d), 4Q391 (4QpsEzek^e). These fragments of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a concern resurrection (frg. 2), the eschatological shortening and hastening of days (frg. 3), and the Ezekielian chariot vision (frg. 4); themes which are of interest to a broader spectrum of apocalyptic tradition. The composition has therefore rightly been associated with apocalypticism and apocalyptic interpretation⁽⁸⁾.

Nevertheless, the parabiblical character of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* should also be given further attention, in view of manuscript evidence which is less frequently and less intensively brought to the attention, that of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b (9). This manuscript, like *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a, partly overlaps with fragment 2 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a. Yet *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b is unique among the Qumran *Pseudo-Ezekiel* manuscripts in that it comprises a fragment with

and Vulgate with plusses on the one hand and the original Septuagint text with minuses on the other as 'two literary strata'.

(6) J. STRUGNELL – D. DIMANT, "4Q Second Ezekiel", *RevQ* 13 (1988) 45-58; ed.pr. by D. DIMANT, *Qumran Cave 4. XXI: Parabiblical Texts, Part 4: Pseudo-Prophetic Texts Partially Based on Earlier Transcriptions by John Strugnell* (DJD 30; Oxford 2001) 7-90 ('Pseudo-Ezekiel').

(7) M. Kister and E. QIMRON, "Observations on 4QSecond Ezekiel (4Q385 2-3)", *RevQ* 15 (1992) 595-602; É. PUECH, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future: immortalité, resurrection, vie éternelle? Histoire d'une croyance dans le judaïsme ancien. 2. Les données qumraniennes et classiques* (EB n.s. 21-22; Paris 1993), 605-16; J. Alison, "An Arboreal Sign of the End-Time (4Q385 2)", *JJS* 47 (1996) 337-344; É. PUECH, "Apports des textes apocalyptiques et sapientiels de Qumrân à l'eschatologie du judaïsme ancien", *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition* (ed. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ) (BETL 168; Leuven 2003) 133-170 at 144-147 ('Le Pseudo-Ezéchiél (4Q385 2-4 et //)'); GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, "The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Dead Sea Scrolls", *Interpreting Translation* (eds. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – VERVENNE) 163-176.

(8) This point about *Pseudo-Ezekiel* was made by way of epilogue by D. DIMANT, "The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel at Qumran", *Messiah and Christos. Studies in the Jewish Origins of Christianity*. FS D. Flusser (eds. I. GRUENWALD – S. SHAKED – G.G. STROUMSA) (TSAJ 32; Tübingen 1992), 31-51 at 49-50 after a survey of sectarian Qumran passages and *New Jerusalem*. See further J.J. COLLINS, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (The Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls; London and New York 1997), 10, 126-128 and 138 and the detailed argument by GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, "The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Dead Sea Scrolls", 163-176.

(9) D. DIMANT, "Resurrection, Restoration, and Time-Curtailling in Qumran, Early Judaism, and Christianity", *RevQ* 19 (2000) 527-548 at 534 gives some attention to 4Q386 as columns III-IV of the composite text of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*, but deems "the vision recorded in 4Q386 1 ii-iii (...) non-biblical". I disagree with this qualification of a manuscript that is part of a composition labelled parabiblical; see discussion below.

several columns. In *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b, the line of thought may therefore be analysed through successive columns. Further scrutiny of this evidence should yield a re-evaluation of the parabiblical character of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* in relation to its 'apocalypticization' of Ezekiel 37. Since columns 1 and 2 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b fragment one elaborate on parts of Ezekiel 37, while it is less clear how column 3 relates to the biblical book of Ezekiel⁽¹⁰⁾, I will focus most attention on these first two columns. Only the phrase about the land's desolation in 4Q386 column 3, line 5 may constitute an element of thought that can be traced back to the same framework as columns 1 and 2.

Before turning to close reading of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b's relation to the biblical text and its theological perspective, some observations need to be made about the literary setting of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*.

I. The Literary Setting of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*

According to D. Dimant, stylistic and literary connections between *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^c, palaeographically dated to the last quarter of the second century BCE, and the other *Pseudo-Ezekiel* manuscripts (4QpsEzek^{a-d}), palaeographically dated to the second half of the first century BCE, point to the unity of the composition. The composition of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* has been dated by Dimant to the mid-second century BCE, in view of the early palaeographical dating of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^c (4Q391) as well as literary and traditio-historical considerations⁽¹¹⁾. The unity of composition in 4QpsEzek^{a-d} and 4QpsEzek^c may further be inferred from similar dialogue forms in 4Q391 frg. 36 as well as in 4Q385 2, 4Q386 1 I-II and 4Q388 7. The early date of composition yields a setting to the text which antedates the establishment of the Qumran community according to any Qumran origins hypothesis⁽¹²⁾.

The pre-Qumranite date of the text also corresponds to the pre- or non-Qumranite characterization of its contents. *Pseudo-Ezekiel* is usually described

⁽¹⁰⁾ Dimant ("Resurrection, Restoration, and Time-Curtailling", 534) argued that 4Q386 1 i-iii reproduce "the thematic sequence in Ezekiel 37-39. However, it seems to me unclear how "cols. II-III (= 4Q386 1 ii-iii) (should) follow Ezek 37,15-38,24" (p. 534). Column III of 4Q386 1 rather comprises imagery, such as a 'cup in the Lord's hand' (1 iii 2) in relation to Babylon, which could be related to other parts of Ezekiel, such as Ezek 23,31-34 and subsequent chapters which mention Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. M. BRADY, "Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-Ezekiel' Fragments (4Q383-391) from Cave Four", in M. HENZE (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature; Grand Rapids, MI 2005), 88-109 at 98 instead compares 4Q386 1 iii 1 to Jeremiah 51,7 and 25,15-29.

⁽¹¹⁾ See DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 7-90 ('Pseudo-Ezekiel') at 7-16, who relates the historical background of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* to "circumstances of the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BCE)" and compares its exegesis to that in Daniel 12 and LXX Isaiah (p. 16). Cf. PUECH, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future*, 2, 605, 616.

⁽¹²⁾ The establishment of the Qumran community was traditionally dated around the last third of the second century BCE on the basis of archaeological and historical arguments; see e.g. J.C. VANDERKAM, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI – London 1994), 99-108 with reference to De Vaux's periodization. However, recent archaeological and historical discussion by J. MAGNESS, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI 2002), 47-72 and M.O. WISE, "Dating the Teacher of Righteousness and the Floruit of His Movement", *JBL* 122 (2003) 53-87 considers a later date for the beginning of the Qumran period, between late second and early first century BCE, possible.

as a non-sectarian parabiblical text, in view of the absence of any identifiable sectarian community terminology and the use of the tetragrammaton⁽¹³⁾ This pre- or non-Qumranite characterization of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* has been argued by many scholars⁽¹⁴⁾. At the same time, the composition was apparently of interest to the Qumran community as ‘adopted text’, in view of the late first-century BCE dates which have been palaeographically assigned to the other *Pseudo-Ezekiel* manuscripts⁽¹⁵⁾. The importance of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* as ‘adopted text’ has been compared to that of *Jubilees* or the *Animal Apocalypse* in 1 Enoch 85-90 by Strugnell and Dimant in their preliminary publication of data about this composition⁽¹⁶⁾. More recently, Dimant observed about *Pseudo-Ezekiel* that origin, background, and ‘precise relationship to the Qumran community’ is “still a matter of debate”⁽¹⁷⁾.

Pseudo-Ezekiel’s classification among ‘parabiblical, pseudo-prophetic texts’ denotes the hybrid character of the text, incorporating both biblical text and elaboration on the biblical text. *Pseudo-Ezekiel* has also been taken to be a specimen of the observer’s category if not genre ‘Rewritten Bible’ with regard to the latter prophets⁽¹⁸⁾.

II. 4QPseudo-Ezekiel and the Biblical Text of Ezek 37

1. 4Q385 2 // 4Q386 1 i // 4Q388 7

For the sake of discussion, reconstructed text and translation of the fragment which introduces the prophecy of the dry bones in *Pseudo-Ezekiel*, as edited by Dimant, are quoted below⁽¹⁹⁾.

4Q386 1 i (// 4Q385 2 2-10, 4Q388 7 4-7)

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1 [ואמרה יהוה ראיתי רבים מישראל אשר אהב] ו את שמך
2 [ויילכו בדרכי לבך ואלה מתי יהוה] ו[הכה ישלמו חסדם
3 vacat ויאמר יהוה אלי אני אראה א]ת בני ישראל וידעו

⁽¹³⁾ The tetragrammaton is extant in 4Q385 frg. 2 lines 3-4, 8-9; frg. 3 (*olim* frg. 12) lines 2-4; frg. 4 (*olim* frg. 3) lines 4 and 7; 4Q386 1 ii 2-3 and 1 iii 1; 4Q385b 1; 4Q388 frg. 7 (*olim* frg. 8) line 6; as edited in *DJD* 30.

⁽¹⁴⁾ STRUGNELL and DIMANT, “4Q Second Ezekiel”, 45-58 at 57-58; PUECH, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future*, 2, 605: “pourrait être préqumrânienne, mais cela reste à démontrer” and n. 2 with reference to the article by STRUGNELL and DIMANT; J.J. COLLINS, “Review: É. Puech, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future*”, *DSD* 1 (1994) 246-252 at 251: “clear indication of sectarian provenance is lacking, and indeed the original editors, Strugnell and Dimant regarded the text as ‘pre-Qumranian’”; ID., *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 124-128 on 4Q385 under the rubric ‘Resurrection in Scrolls That Are Not Clearly Sectarian’; GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, “The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Dead Sea Scrolls”, 176: “4QPseudo-Ezekiel does not show signs of having been written by sectarian authors”.

⁽¹⁵⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 7-9.

⁽¹⁶⁾ STRUGNELL – DIMANT, “4Q Second Ezekiel”, 58.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Dimant (“Resurrection, Restoration, and Time-Curtailing”, 529) makes these observations about both 4Q521 and *Pseudo-Ezekiel*.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See G.J. BROOKE, “Rewritten Bible”, *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. L.H. SCHIFFMAN – J.C. VANDERKAM) (Oxford 2000) II, 777-781 at 779.

⁽¹⁹⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 60-61.

4 [כי אני יהוה] ויאמר בן אדם הנבא על העצמות
 5 [ואמרת ויקרמו עצם אל עצמו] ו[פרק אל פרק ויהי
 6 [כן ויאמר שנית הנבא ויעלי עליהם גדי]ם ויקרמו עוד
 7 [עליהם מלמעלה ויקרמו עוד ויעל]ו[ן] עליהם גדים
 8 [ורוח אין בם ויאמר אלי שוב הנבא] על ארבע רוחות
 9 [השמים ויפחו בם ויעמדו על רגל]יהם[ע]ם רב אנשי[ם]
 10 [ויברכו את יהוה צבאות אשר חים] vacat []

- 1 [And I said: 'O Lord! I have seen many (men) from Israel who have love]d your Name
- 2 [and have walked in the ways of your heart. And these things when will they come to be and] how will they be recompensed for their piety?'
- 3 [vacat And the Lord said to me: 'I will make (it) manifest to th]e children of Israel and they shall know
- 4 [that I am the Lord'. vacat And He said: 'son of man, prop]hesy over the bones
- 5 [and speak and let them be joined bone to its bone and] joint to its joint'. And it was
- 6 [so. And He said a second time: 'Prophesy and let arterie[s] come upon them] and let skin cover 7 [them from above'. And they co]ve[red with skin and] arteries came upon them,
- 8 [but there was not breath in them. And He said to me: 'Prophesy once again] over the four winds
- 9 [of heaven and let them blow into them'. And] a large [cro]wd of peop[le] stood on their f]e[et] 10 [and blessed the Lord Sebaot who had given them life] vacat []

Preceding this overlap text, *Pseudo-Ezekiel*²⁰ fragment 2 line 1 introduces the dialogue between the prophet Ezekiel and God by referring to the Lord as redeemer of his people who gives the covenant to them, הגואל עמי לתת להם הברית, (4Q385 2 1). The prophetic dialogue is modelled after the biblical text of Ezek 37,1-14. As has been noted, a considerable part of the Hebrew biblical text of Ezekiel 37 has also been preserved among Masada manuscripts. According to M. Brady, this passage in the *Pseudo-Ezekiel* composition constitutes an example of "paraphrasing or reworking of specific relatively large biblical passages", in this case mainly related to Ezekiel⁽²⁰⁾.

While the reference to God as speaker in terms of 'redeemer of my people' may echo prophetic tradition in Isaiah (Isa 41,14; 44,24; 48,17; 49,7; 54,8), the giving of the covenant, related in *Pseudo-Ezekiel*²¹ frg. 2, l. 1, voices a covenantal concern also present in Ezek 37,23.26. In the subsequent lines, which overlap with *Pseudo-Ezekiel*²¹ frg. 1 col. 1, the prophecy about bones, sinews and skin which are rejoined and brought to life again is modelled after Ezek 37,1-14. Parts of Ezekiel 37,3.4.7 are recapitulated in this passage; lines 4-5 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*²¹ frg. 1 col. 1. The breath with which the reconstituted bodies are brought back to life again is related to the 'four winds of heaven' according to *Pseudo-Ezekiel* – lines 8-9 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*²¹ frg. 1 col. 1. This notion can also be traced back to the biblical text of Ezekiel, that is, Ezek 37,9.

However, instead of the rise of an 'exceedingly great army', as the Hebrew biblical text of Ezek 37,10 has it⁽²¹⁾, *Pseudo-Ezekiel* mentions the rise

⁽²⁰⁾ BRADY, "Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-Ezekiel' Fragments (4Q383-391) from Cave Four", 95.

⁽²¹⁾ חיל גדול מאד מאד in MT Ezek 37,10; MasEzek corresponds at this point with MT Ezek 37,10; cf. the translation "a huge army" in ABEGG – FLINT – ULRICH, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 415. LXX Ezek 37,10 provides a more general rendering: συναγωγὴ πολλῆς φύδου, 'an exceedingly great multitude /company'.

of a 'large crowd of people', עַם רַב אֲנִשִּׁים, 'who will bless the Lord of hosts who has brought them back to life'. This is in *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b 1 i 9-10, which runs parallel to *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b frg. 2, lines 8-9.

The most significant divergence from the biblical text, which has already frequently been highlighted⁽²²⁾, is the setting of dialogue which introduces the prophecy over the bones in reaction to Ezekiel's question what the reward will be for those loyal to the paths of the Lord. Contrary to the biblical text, in which the Lord poses a question to Ezekiel whether the dry bones can live (Ezek 37,3) to which the prophet reacts and after which the vision of prophecy unravels, *Pseudo-Ezekiel* introduces the vision as response to the following question of the protagonist Ezekiel: "O Lord! I have seen many from Israel who have loved your Name and have walked in the ways of your heart. And these things when will they come to be and how will they be recompensed for their piety?" (4Q385 2 2-3 // 4Q386 1 I 1-2 // 4Q388 7 3-5)⁽²³⁾. This translation follows the reconstruction of Hebrew text by Dimant. A small part of the fragmentarily preserved text has been reconstructed by other scholars in a different way, rendering 'paths of righteousness', דְּרָכֵי צֶדֶק⁽²⁴⁾, rather than 'ways of your heart', דְּרָכֵי לִבְךָ⁽²⁵⁾. Yet the upshot of the prophetic question remains in both cases related to reward for loyalty to the Lord's ways. In both reconstructions, the question may be understood as setting the scene for the interpretation of Ezekiel 37 in terms of resurrection as reward for the righteous⁽²⁶⁾.

However, the question is whether this divergence should be understood in exclusive terms of later reinterpretation in apocalyptic directions. This brings us to the sequence of the first two columns in fragment 1 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b. Analysis of the second column as sequel to the first column gives the impression that the relation to the biblical text is more complicated, as I will now attempt to demonstrate.

2. 4Q386 1 ii

The evidence of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b fragment 1 columns 1-2 provides occasion to rethink the relation between this parabiblical text and biblical tradition. The first column as overlapping evidence to *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b frg. 2 presents a clearly different setting of prophecy over the bones than the biblical text: eschatological resurrection as reward for the righteous⁽²⁷⁾ rather

⁽²²⁾ See note 7 above.

⁽²³⁾ Translation from DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 24, 61 and 83.

⁽²⁴⁾ PUECH, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future*. 2, 609; F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ and E.J.C. TIGCHELAAR, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* 2 (4Q274-11Q31) (Leiden – Grand Rapids, MI 2000) 768, 775, and 778.

⁽²⁵⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 23 deems the reconstruction דְּרָכֵי צֶדֶק by previous editors also possible, but supports her reconstruction לִבְךָ דְּרָכֵי through references to Qoh 11,9, CD-A 1 11, 1QH^a IV 18, 4Q434 1 i 11. The reconstruction דְּרָכֵי צֶדֶק is paralleled by its occurrence in 4Q420 (*4Q Ways of Righteousness*) 1 II 5 (// 4Q421 1 II 16).

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 9: "Our author interprets this vision as presenting the future reward for the righteous in the form of resurrection".

⁽²⁷⁾ Note the focus on the temporal, i.e. eschatological, dimension in the twice repeated question 'when will these things come to be?' in 4Q385 2 3, וַיֹּאמֶר מַתִּי יְהוָה, and 1.9, מַתִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי. 'These things' possibly refer back to the announced redemption of the people and the giving or

than a prophetic vision about return from exile and national restoration for Israel.

Text and translation of column 2 of 4Q386 fragment 1 are cited below ⁽²⁸⁾.

4Q386 1 ii

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1 [אֵל] יְיָ וידעו כי אני יהוה vacat ואמר אלי התבונן
2 בן אדם בארצת ישראל ואמר ראיתי יהוה והנה חרבה
3 ומתי תקבצם ויאמר יהוה בן בלעל יחשב לענות את עמי
4 ולא אניה לו ומשרו לא יהיה והמן הממא זרע לא ישאר
5 ומנצפה לא יהיה תירוש ותזין לא יעשה דבש [] ואת
6 הרשע אחרג במף ואת בני אוציא ממף ועל ש[א]רם אהפך
7 כאשר יאמרו היה השל[ו]ם והשרך ואמרו תה[י]ה הארץ
8 כאשר היתה בימי [] קדם בכך אעיר עליהם חמ[ו]ן
9 מן[א]ר[ב]ע רחות השמי[ם] [] את []
10 [כא]ש בערת כ []
11 [] [] []

1 [la]nd and they will know that I am the Lord vacat and he said to me: consider,
2 son of man, the land of Israel. And I said, I have seen, Lord, but look, it is a desolated
place
3 and when will you assemble them? And the Lord said: a son of Belial will mean to
oppress my people,
4 but I will not allow him and of his leader(ship) there will not be (anyone), nor will
any offspring remain of the impure one.
5 And of the caperbush there will not be any wine, nor will a bee make honey.
6 But I will slay the wicked one in Memphis and I will bring my children out of
Memphis and turn the reverse way concerning their remnant.
7 As they will say, 'peace and quiet have come', they will (also) say, 'the land will be
8 as it was in days [] of old'. After this I will arouse wrath against them
9 from the four quarters of the heavens[] [] [] 10 [like]
a burning [fi]re, like ?[] 11 [] [] [].

The sequel of thought in the second column of fragment 1 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b is also one of future, if not eschatologically oriented expectation ⁽²⁹⁾. Yet the expectation here does not apply to resurrection, but to the gathering together of the people and the divine act of returning a remnant (4Q386 1 ii 3 and 6). This evidence, which I am about to discuss, gives the impression that the composition at large did not envisage a substitution of the supposedly original sense of return and restoration by apocalyptic reinterpretation.

The relation of this second column to biblical tradition has been considered to be much more difficult to trace back than is the case with the first column which overlaps with *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b frg. 2 ⁽³⁰⁾. I will therefore go

restoring of the covenant to them (4Q385 2 1); circumstances of which the reward of resurrection for the righteous presumably constitute the fulfilment.

⁽²⁸⁾ Text from DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 62; translation my own.

⁽²⁹⁾ Dimant (*DJD* 30, 25) observes that "the preoccupation with the appointed time for eschatological events is also the concern of frgs. 3, 4, and 6, and of 4Q386 1 ii 3", thereby including evidence from the second column of 4Q386 frg. 1.

⁽³⁰⁾ Dimant ("Resurrection, Restoration, and Time-Curtailing", 534) argues that "the vision recorded in 4Q386 1 ii-iii is non-biblical", while yet associating a thematic sequence with 4Q385 2+3 // 4Q386 1 i // 4Q388 7 as corresponding to Ezek 37,1-14 and with 4Q386 1 ii-iii as corresponding to Ezek 37,15-38,24; Brady ("Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-

through the text of this second column line by line and comment on its characteristics as sequel to the first column.

Line 1 supposedly continues from a piece of text of column 1 now lost with the words “land and they will know that I am the Lord”. This statement could be paralleled by Ezekiel 37,12-13 which mention the return to the land of Israel and the phrase “and you shall know that I am the Lord” (RSV), וידעתם כי אני יהוה. The difference with the biblical text is the turn from the second person plural, in which divine speech directly addresses the people of Israel, to the third person plural which addresses the people indirectly through the prophet as intermediary.

Lines 1-2, starting after a blank space, introduce divine speech as follows: “and he said to me: consider, son of man, the land of Israel”. The way the protagonist Ezekiel is addressed, as ‘son of man’, is derived from biblical usage in the book of Ezekiel, and the designation ‘land of Israel’, ארצו ישראל, is identical to that used in MT Ezek 37,12. In the Masoretic Text, this expression is part of a vision of return to the land. In *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b frg. 1 col. 2, the expression could be read as anticipation on the sequel of divine speech in lines 3-6 that also come to speak about return.

The reaction of Ezekiel in the second part of line 2, ‘and I said, I have seen, Lord, and but look, it is a desolated place’, could correspond to biblical references to a desolate land in Ezek 36,33-36 together with its envisioned rebuilding. In line 3 a second part of Ezekiel’s reaction is the question addressing the Lord, ‘when will you assemble them?’. The expectation of the gathering of the people in spite of a situation of barrenness voices a contrast that is also at issue in the vision of Ezek 37,1-14. The vision of gathering and return of the people transcends the exasperation in the words of Ezek 37,11: “behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are clean cut off”⁽³¹⁾. The vision of gathering of the people, on which *Pseudo-Ezekiel*’s prophetic protagonist anticipates at the beginning of line 3, expresses itself with the same verb, קבץ, as Ezek 36,24 and 37,21 do. Ezek 36,24 already envisions the restoration of Israel through the following divine speech: “For I will take you from the nations, and gather you (וקבצתי אתכם) from all the countries, and bring you into your own land” (RSV). The verbal form תקבצם in line 3 of this column in *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b corresponds even more closely to the text of Ezek 37,21, which likewise addresses the people with the third person plural (וקבצתי אתם).

Lines 3-6 comprise the following divine speech in response to the question about gathering of the people: “And the Lord said: a son of Belial will mean to oppress my people, but I will not allow him and of his leader(ship)⁽³²⁾ there will not be (anyone), nor will any offspring remain of the

Ezekiel’ Fragments [4Q383-391] from Cave Four”, 107) argues that 4Q386 1 ii “has no close connection to any biblical passage”, adding about the ‘different types of biblical interpretation’ in 4Q386 1 i-iii: “Had these columns been found physically separate from one another and been classified according to Dimant’s criteria for subdivisions, most likely they would have been placed in distinct categories”.

⁽³¹⁾ Translation from the Jerusalem Bible.

⁽³²⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 64 proposes to read משר as a defective orthography of משרי in this line, but this leaves unexplained the evidence of otherwise plene orthography of the verb שאר in the same line and possibly of the noun in line 6 (שאר[ת]). Cf. García Martínez – Tigheelaar (*Study Edition*. 2, 777) who translate משר as ‘his dominion’.

impure one. And of the caperbush there will not be any wine, nor will a bee⁽³³⁾ make honey. But I will slay the wicked one in Memphis and I will bring my children out of Memphis and turn the reverse way concerning their remnant⁽³⁴⁾. The events related here have been associated with historical circumstances of the Maccabean era⁽³⁵⁾. Yet there are also some points of connection between the wording in these lines and the book of Ezekiel. Ezek 38,1 – 39,29 comprise Gog and Magog oracles, starting with the description of a chief prince of Gog (Ezek 38,2) and his evil scheme, מחשבת רעה (Ezek 38,10), against the people which ultimately ends in the defeat of Gog (Ezek 38,21-23). This description could provide a general parallel to lines 3 and 4 of our passage in *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b. The killing of the wicked one in Memphis and the exodus of God's children from Memphis, which is recounted in line 6, could have a general parallel in Ezek 30,13. This biblical passage relates the divine destruction of idols in Memphis and the assurance that "there shall no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt" (RSV)⁽³⁶⁾.

The reverse way which the Lord turns concerning their remnant according to line 6 appears to serve as complement to the phrase that he 'will bring his children out of Memphis'. The reverse way is the reverse of the situation in Memphis and the complete sentence thereby implies return of a remnant to the land of Israel. This implication is further supported by the direction of the dialogue, which began with the prophet's question about gathering of the people and continues with reference to the land, הארץ, in line 7⁽³⁷⁾. Line 6 thereby envisions a divine exodus and return of a remnant, in a dialogue setting with a horizon of expectation that the people will be gathered together at some point in the future.

Lines 7-9 subsequently describe apocalyptic circumstances of divine wrath in the following way: "7 As they will say, 'peace and quiet have come', they will (also) say, 'the land will be 8 as it was in days of old'. After this I will arouse wrath against them 9 from the four quarters of the heavens". The fragmentarily preserved line 10 seems to suggest that this wrath is 'like burning fire'. Also at this point, the Gog and Magog oracles of Ezekiel 38-39 may play in the background. Analogously, the oracle in Ezekiel 38 describes a

⁽³³⁾ On this noun, תוֹי, previously unattested in biblical or rabbinic Hebrew, cf. DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 64-65.

⁽³⁴⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 65 notes the unparalleled usage על הפך in this line, but suggests a translation 'I will return' "on the basis of biblical and post-biblical usages". However, the verb שׁוּב usually denotes the activity to return; usage which is also much more common in the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g. 1QM I 3; 4Q161 2-6 I // 4Q163 4-6 II 10-11; 4Q166 I 16; 4Q508 2 2 (עַתָּה שׁוּב, 'time of return')). The translation 'I will turn myself toward their remnant' by García Martínez – Tigchelaar (*Study Edition*, 2, 777) presupposes the reading of אֶפְשָׁר as a niphāl.

⁽³⁵⁾ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 55-59 ('Dating events in Pseudo-Ezekiel'). Cf. Brady ("Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-Ezekiel' Fragments", 106 and n. 34) who refers to a suggestion by B.Z. Wacholder that the biblical passages serve as "vehicles to depict contemporary issues and presage the future".

⁽³⁶⁾ Note that the identification of 'seemingly disparate elements' in 4Q386 1 i-iii by BRADY, "Biblical Interpretation in the 'Pseudo-Ezekiel' Fragments", 107 could be contradicted by comparison of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b with biblical passages like Ezekiel 30:10-13 which mention both Babylon and Memphis (Egypt).

⁽³⁷⁾ According to Dimant (*DJD* 30, 66) this is "undoubtedly the Land of Israel, since it is the subject of the vision". References to the Land of Israel as אֶרֶץ also occur in Ezekiel 37,22.25 and 38,8.

point in time of secure dwelling for the people of Israel (Ezek 38,14), when the forces of Gog come up against them, but they are ultimately defeated by the Lord's wrath (Ezek 38,18-23; חמרי in Ezek 38,18) which is also represented by imagery of fire and the like (Ezek 38,22). The reference to 'four winds of heaven' or 'four quarters of the heavens' in line 9 may be paralleled by Ezek 37,9. However, in Ezek 37,9 the imagery of 'four winds', ארבע רוחות, applies to the breathing of life upon the slain whose bones stand for the whole house of Israel (Ezek 37,11). In line with the rest of the vision then, the 'wrath against them' mentioned in line 8 probably stands for wrath against the collectivity represented by the son of Belial (4Q386 1 ii 3), the impure one (4Q386 1 ii 4), and the wicked one (4Q386 1 ii 6). This column's elaboration on the biblical text envisions the restoration of Israel in terms of exodus and return on the one hand and burning wrath against its oppressors on the other.

Column 2 of fragment 1 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b stands in between two columns. The first column has presented the very physical imagery of Ezek 37,1-10 in an eschatological setting of resurrection as reward for the righteous. Column 2 further goes into apocalyptic tribulation in a less close, but broader relation to passages in the book of Ezekiel, like Ezekiel 30 and 38, but it also takes up terms and themes from Ezek 37,11-14, namely return to the land. In relation to the previous two columns, column 3 appears to look back to the Babylo-nian exile, referring to Babylon as 'a cup in the hand of the Lord' (4Q386 1 iii 1) and to a situation of desolation (4Q386 1 iii 5)⁽³⁸⁾.

III. Resurrection in the Theological Perspective of 4QPseudo-Ezekiel

Some observations are to be made about resurrection in the theological perspective of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*, before I turn to conclusion. *Pseudo-Ezekiel* yields a theological perspective in which 'many from Israel', רבים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, who are loyal to God's ways are rewarded through future resurrection. They are probably the ones whom the author of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b also has in mind when writing about the remnant (4Q386 1 ii 6). This conceptualisation comes close to the notion of an elect group of righteous in apocalyptic tradition⁽³⁹⁾. Yet *Pseudo-Ezekiel* also addresses the broader setting of God's covenant relationship (4Q385 2 1) with the children of Israel (4Q385 2 4 // 4Q386 1 I 3 // 4Q388 7 6), God's people (4Q386 1 ii 3 and 6). These covenantal concerns are also present in Ezek 37,23. Even the elaboration on 37,10, which mentions an 'exceedingly great army', is expressed in covenant terms of a large crowd of people who bless the Lord of hosts as giver of life (4Q385 2 8-9 // 4Q386 1 i 9-10). Column 2 of fragment 1 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b yields the impression that the apocalyptic vision of resurrection for the righteous is not separable from a vision of the land of Israel and the gathering of God's people into this land.

⁽³⁸⁾ The third column has been too fragmentarily preserved to draw firm conclusions about thematic coherence. Perhaps the sequence of a vision of restoration of Israel in Ezek 37, the war of Gog against Israel, and Gog's ultimate defeat in Ezek 38 provides an analogy for this sequel of thought in 4Q386 1 i-iii.

⁽³⁹⁾ Cf. 4Q385c (4QpsEzek, unidentified fragments) fragment F line 2, עַם מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, 'his people from among the children of Israel' (text and translation from DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 87) appears to make a distinction between 'people' and 'sons of Israel', thereby also possibly presupposing a notion of an elect people.

IV. Evaluation and Conclusions

In conclusion, the evidence of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* stands in an intricate relation to the biblical text of Ezekiel. As a specimen of 'rewritten Bible', *Pseudo-Ezekiel* comprises more elaboration on biblical passages of Ezekiel than previously assumed. While the 'apocalyp-tization' of Ezekiel 37 has been generally acknowledged mainly on the basis of fragment 2 of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^a, the composition as it appears from two columns of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b yields the idea that the 'apocalyp-tization' does not substitute the supposed original sense of the biblical text. *Pseudo-Ezekiel* elaborates on both the symbolical imagery of revivification and on gathering, return and restoration of the people of Israel⁴⁰. Perhaps the biblical text already provides a point of departure for the intertwined occurrence of resurrection and restoration, for the symbolical imagery of revivification not only occurs in Ezekiel 37,1-10, but also recurs in the interpretive section, in Ezek 37,12-13. *Pseudo-Ezekiel*^b provides a perspective in which resurrection for the righteous has its setting in eschatological restoration of God's people in the land of Israel. The prophetic notion of restoration has thereby also become eschatologized. A horizon of eschatological expectations of restoration is also common to Qumran sectarian texts like the *Isaiah Peshar* (4Q163 [4Qpap pIsa^c] 4-6 II 8-12), and the *War Scroll* (1QM I 3). This could explain the interest of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* as 'adopted text' for the Qumran community.

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SUMMARY

Analysis of 4QPseudo-Ezekiel^b (4Q386) fragment 1 columns I-II reveals that this parabiblical Qumran composition stands in a more intricate dialogue with biblical tradition than previously assumed. This article refines previous argument that contrasted the apocalyptic vision of resurrection in 4QPseudo-Ezekiel^a (4Q385) fragment 2 to the prophetic vision of national restoration in MT Ezekiel 37 (/ MasEzek). 4QPseudo-Ezekiel^b 1 i-ii exhibits an apocalyptic vision which incorporates both resurrection for the pious in Israel and an eschatologized notion of restoration. Textual dialogue in *Pseudo-Ezekiel* together with textual tradition in Papyrus 967 attest to an eschatological reading of Ezekiel 37 constituting an early part of biblical tradition.

⁴⁰ DIMANT, *DJD* 30, 10 observed that "the outline of Ezekiel 37-43 strings the surviving passages (of *Pseudo-Ezekiel*) into a coherent sequence, and assigns all these scenes to the sphere of the final, redemptive era". However, rather than the biblical text per se as background for searching thematic coherence, the editorial role of the author of *Pseudo-Ezekiel* in providing thematic coherence throughout the elaboration on Ezekiel 37 and other Ezekielian passages may be more prominent, as I have aimed to demonstrate.

The “One Like a Son of Man” According to the Old Greek of Daniel 7,13-14

Studies of the “one like a son of man” in Daniel 7 typically follow the description found in the Aramaic text of Daniel ⁽¹⁾. Reference is made to the two Greek versions of Daniel, the Old Greek (OG) and Theodotion (Θ) ⁽²⁾, when their support deviates from the Aramaic or offers some other relevant insight ⁽³⁾. Although it is important to keep in mind the differences between the Aramaic and Greek versions and the reasons for these differences ⁽⁴⁾, it is also worthwhile to examine the interpretation provided by the OG because the OG is a witness to a specific tradition of Daniel and since in some sense or at some level, every translation is an interpretation ⁽⁵⁾. Jennifer Dines states:

Even if it is unclear whether a divergence between the LXX and the MT comes from the translator or from his source-text, a difference of interpretation between the two texts has significance. If nothing else, it shows that there were different streams of tradition, and if the LXX witnesses to some elements of interpretation which have not otherwise been preserved in Hebrew [or Aramaic], it is a very important window onto a period of biblical interpretation before the MT emerged as dominant ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ I am grateful for the various comments and questions given by those who heard earlier drafts of this paper at the Society of Biblical Literature Greek Bible Section, 22 November 2007 and the Scottish Conference for Postgraduate Students in Theology and Religious Studies, 8 June 2006.

⁽²⁾ There are only three known witnesses to the OG text of Daniel in existence today: Codex Chisianus 88 (9th-11th century CE), a Syriac version translated from the Greek called the Syro-Hexaplar (7th century CE), and Papyrus 967 (2nd-3rd century CE). Only Papyrus 967 is witness to the OG prior to Origen’s reworking of the Greek Old Testament into his Hexapla. See H.B. SWETE, *The Old Testament Text in Greek* (Cambridge 1912) III.xii-xiii (discussion of ms. evidence); A. RAHLFS – R. HANHART, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart 2006); J. ZIEGLER, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco* (Septuaginta 16.2; Göttingen 1954); J. ZIEGLER – O. MUNNICH, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco* (Septuaginta 16.2; Göttingen 1999); T. MCLAY, *The OG and Th Versions of Daniel* (SBLSCS 43; Atlanta, GA 1996) 6-7; L.T. STUCKENBRUCK, “One like a Son of Man as the Ancient of Days” in the Old Greek Recension of Daniel 7,13: Scribal Error or Theological Translation?”, *ZNW* 86 (1995) 270. On P⁹⁶⁷, see A. GEISSEN, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel*. Kap. 5-12 zusammen mit Susanna, Bel et Draco sowie Esther 1,1-2,15 nach dem Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967 (PTA 5; Bonn 1968). N. Fernández Marcos (*The Septuagint in Context*. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible [Leiden 2000] 144) and A. Schmitt (“Die griechischen Danieltexte [‘θ’ und ‘ο’] und das Theodotionproblem”, *BZ* 36 [1992] 5, n. 14) date P⁹⁶⁷ to the second century AD.

⁽³⁾ One possible exception is T.J. Meadowcroft’s work on Daniel 7 (*Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*. A Literary Comparison [JSOTSS 198; Sheffield 1995] 198-244), but the emphasis of his study is on the comparison of the Aramaic and OG and the possible *Vorlage* of the OG.

⁽⁴⁾ K.H. Jobes and M. Silva list five reasons for differences between the Greek OT and the Masoretic Text (*Invitation to the Septuagint* [Grand Rapids, MI 2000] 92).

⁽⁵⁾ See M.A. KNIBB, “The Septuagint and Messianism: Problems and Issues”, *The Septuagint and Messianism* (ed. Id.) (BETL 195; Leuven 2006) 9; JOBES – SILVA, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 86.

⁽⁶⁾ J.M. DINES, *The Septuagint* (London 2004) 133.

This paper is a study of what is possibly the earliest extant interpretation of the Aramaic text of Daniel 7 and the “one like a son of man”⁽⁷⁾. My contention is first that the OG presents the son of man figure as similar to the Ancient of Days, while not identifying the two figures. And second, the OG depicts the “one like a son of man” in a way that suggests that this figure is messianic.

I. The Similarities between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days

Four similarities between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days can be noted in the OG. First, the son of man figure arrives like the Ancient of Days. Second, the “one like a son of man” appears on the clouds of heaven. Third, the Danielic son of man receives service that suggests cultic worship, and fourth, those standing before the Ancient of Days approach the “one like a son of man” and appear to stand before him.

1. *The “one like a son of man’s” Arrival like the Ancient of Days*

The most commonly noted and most significant verse in the OG of Dan 7 is v. 13, particularly line c. The entire verse reads: “I saw in a vision of the night and behold on the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man. And like the Ancient of Days he arrived, and those standing there came to him.”

Papyrus 967 reads⁽⁸⁾:

- 13 a ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς
b καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἦρχετο ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,
c καὶ ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(ν) παρῆν,
d καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτῷ.
14 a καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία βασιλική,
b καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πάντα δόξα λατρεύουσα αὐτῷ
c καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἄρθῃ,
d καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ θοαρῇ

Codex 88, supported by the Syro-Hexaplar, reads⁽⁹⁾:

- 13 a ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς
b καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἦρχετο,

⁽⁷⁾ 4Q246 contains some links to Daniel 7, but the fragmentary nature of the Qumran text provides less certainty about whether the “Son of God” figure is an interpretation of the “one like a son of man”. For various views, see J.J. COLLINS, “The *Son of God* Text from Qumran”, *From Jesus to John. Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge* (ed. M. DE BOER) (JSNTSS 84; Sheffield 1993) 65-82; J.D.G. DUNN, “‘Son of God’ as ‘Son of Man’ in the Dead Seas Scrolls? A Response to John Collins on 4Q246”, *The Scrolls and the Scriptures. Qumran Fifty Years After* (eds. S.E. PORTER – C.A. EVANS) (JSPSS 26; Sheffield 1997) 198-210; H.-J. FABRY, “Die frühjüdische Apokalyptik als Reaktion auf Fremdherrschaft. Zur Funktion von 4Q246”, *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum. Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. E. GRÄBER) (BZNW 97; Berlin 1999) 84-98.

⁽⁸⁾ Text of Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108-110.

⁽⁹⁾ Text of RAHLFS – HANHART, *Septuaginta*, 913-914.

- c καὶ ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρῆν,
 d καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες παρήσαν αὐτῷ.
 14 a καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία,
 b καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῷ
 λατρεύουσα
 c καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἄρθῃ,
 d καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῇ

The significance of v. 13c is that the “one like a son of man” did not come *to* the Ancient of Days (as in the MT and Θ), but *as* or *like* the Ancient of Days. Scholars have debated how the OG translation came to read ὥς while the MT has כִּי and Θ has ἕως, and many suggestions have been made. Since we are focusing on the OG as a separate tradition and interpretation, we will not spend time in discussion of the reasons for the difference⁽¹⁰⁾. Therefore, the question to be answered is: What does ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν mean in the OG of Daniel 7,13?

Two possible meanings for ὥς in 7,13c were suggested by F.F. Bruce. The word ὥς can either have a temporal referent: “*When* the Ancient of Days came, then those standing there came to him,” or it means the same as the previous ὥς in 7,13b: “he came *as* the Ancient of Days”⁽¹¹⁾. One of the major difficulties with the temporal meaning is that it would require a different meaning of ὥς in the previous line. While this is not impossible, the chiasmic (P⁹⁶⁷) and the synonymous structure (Codex 88) of the two lines indicate that both uses of ὥς should be taken to mean “as” or “like”⁽¹²⁾.

P⁹⁶⁷:

- 13 b2 ἦρχετο ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,
 13 c καὶ ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) παρῆν.

⁽¹⁰⁾ J.A. Montgomery (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* [ICC; Edinburgh 1927] 304) suggested that the use of ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν was a scribal error for ἕως. In his critical edition, Ziegler corrected the OG from ὥς to ἕως thinking that ὥς was a scribal error (*Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 170; also in the second edition, Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 338). As is often mentioned, Ziegler did not have the benefit of Papyrus 967 when his edition was published (see J. LUST, “Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, *ETL* 54 [1978] 62), but Sharon Pace Jeanson who had access to the full text of Papyrus 967 relies on Ziegler’s emended text and does not mention Papyrus 967 in her discussion of Dan 7,13. She also concludes that ὥς was a scribal error, which caused παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν to be “hyper-corrected” to παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν (*The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7-12* [Washington, DC 1988] 96-99; also A. YARBRO COLLINS, “The ‘Son of Man’ Tradition and the Book of Revelation”, *The Messiah*. Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity [ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH] [Minneapolis, MN 1992] 536-568). Other suggestions for the existence of ὥς in the OG witnesses include a purposeful change by the translator for theological reasons, often referred to as “theological Tendenz” (F.F. BRUCE, “The Oldest Greek Version of Daniel”, *OTS* 20 [1977] 25; STUCKENBRUCK, “One Like a Son of Man”, 276. Cf. A.F. SEGAL, *Two Powers in Heaven*. Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism [SJLA 25; Leiden 1977] 202; “Two Powers in Heaven” and Early Christian Trinitarian Thinking”, *Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity* [eds. S.T. DAVIS et al.] [New York 1999] 73-95), or that the OG is an accurate translation of its Vorlage (LUST, “Daniel 7,13”, 66; see also MEADOWCROFT, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 26).

⁽¹¹⁾ BRUCE, “Oldest Greek Version”, 25.

⁽¹²⁾ Lust (“Daniel 7,13”, 65) rules out the temporal option because he says ὥς is never used temporally in a visionary context within Daniel or in the visions of Ezekiel.

Codex 88:

13 b2 ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἦρχετο,

13 c καὶ ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρήν, ⁽¹³⁾

Recently, Otfried Hofius has argued that the “one like a son of man” does not come as the Ancient of Days but that the Ancient of Days is the subject of v. 13c. He states: “Wie in V. 13b der Ausdruck ὥς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου das Subjekt zu ἦρχετο ist, so in V. 13c der Ausdruck ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν das Subjekt zu παρήν” ⁽¹⁴⁾. Hofius has correctly recognized the similar structure between 7,13b and 7,13c, but his interpretation implies the existence of two figures in 7,13 rather than the view taken by most scholars which only sees one figure. Hofius understands this second figure in 7,13c to be the Ancient of Days who is mentioned in 7,9-10 ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Hofius’ view faces difficulties at four points. First, the verb πάριμι (παρήν) in 7,13c cannot merely be translated ‘to be present’ as Hofius does ⁽¹⁶⁾. The verb more often carries the meaning ‘to have come’ or ‘to be present’ with a sense of arrival ⁽¹⁷⁾. Secondly, a difference exists between the absolute use of παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in 7,9-10 and its descriptive use in the phrase ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in 7,13. The reference to the Ancient of Days in 7,13 is not to the Ancient of Days himself, but rather ὥς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν is used as a description of the “one like a son of man” ⁽¹⁸⁾. Thirdly, *unlike* Θ and Aramaic Daniel, the pronoun in OG Dan 7,13d (αὐτῷ) refers back to the son of man figure and not to the Ancient of Days ⁽¹⁹⁾.

The fourth difficulty with Hofius’ position highlights the similarity between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days. The grammatical structure of the phrase ὥς...καὶ ὥς... ⁽²⁰⁾, which is found here in OG Dan 7,13, typically indicates a parallelism. A subject or a verbal action is described as like one thing and like another. Even if different verbs are used in each of the ὥς clauses, as we find in OG Dan 7,13, a parallelism still exists. The subject of each clause is assumed to be the same unless it is clearly stated otherwise and the nouns in the ὥς clauses do not function as the subjects of clauses ⁽²¹⁾.

Joel 2,7 – ὥς μαχηταὶ δραμοῦνται καὶ ὥς ἄνδρες πολεμισταὶ
ἀναβήσονται ἐπὶ τὰ τείχη

Isa 38,14 – ὥς χελιδὼν οὕτως φωνήσω καὶ ὥς περιστέρα οὕτως
μελετήσω

⁽¹³⁾ The underlining notes the change of position in the verbs creating a chiasmic structure in P²⁶⁷ and a synonymous structure in Codex 88.

⁽¹⁴⁾ O. HOFIUS, “Der Septuaginta-Text von Daniel 7,13-14”, ZAW 117 (2005) 84-85.

⁽¹⁵⁾ HOFIUS, “Septuaginta-Text”, 86.

⁽¹⁶⁾ HOFIUS, “Septuaginta-Text”, 86, esp. n. 67.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See for example Num 22,20; Judg^s 19,3; 2 Sam 5,23; 13,35; 15,18; Ezra 6,3; Esth 9,1; Job 1,7; 2,2; Prov 1,27; Isa 58,9; 1 Macc 12,65.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See KIM, *Son of Man*, 23-24.

⁽¹⁹⁾ KIM, *Son of Man*, 23. Cf. HOFIUS, “Septuaginta-Text”, 87.

⁽²⁰⁾ By ‘ὥς...καὶ ὥς...’, I am referring to passages in which ὥς is used more than once in close succession and separated by a καὶ.

⁽²¹⁾ I could find no instance in the OT, Apocrypha, or the NT of a ὥς...καὶ ὥς... construction in which ὥς and the noun following it served as the subject of the phrase.

Ezek 38,9 – καὶ ἀναβήσῃ ὡς ὑετὸς καὶ ἦξῃς ὡς νεφέλη κατακαλύψαι γῆν

Sir 24,15 – ὡς κιννάμωνον καὶ ἀσπάλαθος ἀρωμάτων δέδωκα ὁσμὴν καὶ ὡς σμύρνα ἐκλεκτὴ διέδωκα εὐωδίαν⁽²²⁾.

With respect to OG Dan 7,13, this means that ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου and ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν are being used in the same sort of parallel structure. Both phrases are descriptions of the figure that Daniel sees in his vision of the night coming with the clouds of heaven. The figure who comes with the clouds like a son of man also arrives like the Ancient of Days⁽²³⁾.

Thus, the OG witnesses refer to the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days, but this similarity does not mean that the “one like a son of man” is the same being as the Ancient of Days in 7,9-10⁽²⁴⁾. But, as with the Aramaic text of Daniel, the OG also presents the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days as two distinct figures. Evidence for this is seen in the giving of authority to the “one like a son of man”⁽²⁵⁾. Who else is capable of giving the son of man figure authority other than the Ancient of Days? However, although the “one like a son of man” is portrayed as distinct from the figure of the Ancient of Days in 7,9-10, the OG closely aligns the Ancient of Days and the “one like a son of man” by describing the “one like a son of man” as ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in 7,13c.

2. The “one like a son of man’s” Appearance on the Clouds

The second aspect that indicates similarity between the Ancient of Days and the “one like a son of man” is the son of man figure’s appearance on the clouds of heaven. In 7,13b, the OG states that the son of man figure came ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. The MT uses the preposition עַל to indicate the son of man figure’s position in relation to the clouds. Θ translates עַל with μετὰ. Some scholars have attempted to argue that the use of ἐπὶ by the OG implies a divine status of the “one like a son of man” since that figure appeared “on” the clouds of heaven rather than “with” the clouds of heaven⁽²⁶⁾. However, this much weight cannot be placed on the prepositions alone⁽²⁷⁾ especially since the meaning of prepositions is often fluid even within a language. Examples of the fluidity of Greek preposition use can be seen in the references to Dan 7,13 in the NT.

⁽²²⁾ See also: Num 23,24; Deut 32,2; 2 Sam 22,43//Ps 17,45; Pss 77,52; 81,7; 88,37, 38; Prov 2,4; Hos. 2,5; 9,10; Nah 1,10; Isa 1,9 (cf. Rom 9,29); Wis 3,6; Sir 15,2; 28,23; 39,22; 47,18.

⁽²³⁾ For a more in depth discussion of the difficulties with Hofius’ argument, see B.E. REYNOLDS, “Another Suggestion for ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in the Old Greek of Daniel 7:13”, *Henoch*, 30 (2008) 94-103.

⁽²⁴⁾ Lust (“Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, 68) states: “...in the Septuagint, the ‘Son of Man’ and the ‘Ancient of Days’ are the same.” Cf. M. HENGEL, “‘Sit at My Right Hand!’ The Enthronement of Christ at the Right Hand of God and Psalm 110:1”, (Id.), *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh 1995) 184.

⁽²⁵⁾ STUCKENBRUCK, “One Like a Son of Man”, 275.

⁽²⁶⁾ LUST, “Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint”, 68; MEADOWCROFT, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 228.

⁽²⁷⁾ See S.P. JEANSONNE, *The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7-12*, 112.

- ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν – Matt 24,30; 26,64
 ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην – Rev 14,14
 μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν – Mark 14,62; Rev 1,7 (but ἐπὶ in some Rev mss.)
 ἐν νεφέλαις – Mark 13,26
 ἐν νεφέλῃ – Luke 21,27

Therefore, it seems unwise to use the prepositions in Dan 7,13 to argue for or against the "one like a son of man's" similarity with the Ancient of Days. The important point is the figure's appearance on the visionary stage in the presence of clouds. His position, whether he is on the clouds or with them (or even in them), provides insufficient evidence for determining the nature or identity of this figure.

Rather, the significance is in the reference to clouds. Clouds, in the OT commonly indicate the appearance of YHWH⁽²⁸⁾. God's presence in the tabernacle and in the temple is signified by the presence of a cloud (Exod 40,34-35; 1 Kgs 8,10-11; 2 Chron 5,13-14). The pillar of cloud also indicates the Lord's presence (Exod 13,21-22; 14,19). In Deut 5,22, the Lord's presence on Sinai is connected with fire, cloud, gloom, and darkness. Jer 4,13 speaks of God's chariot as closely related to the clouds (cf. Ezek 1,4,28), and Ps 97,2 highlights the relationship between clouds, fire, and God's throne (cf. Ps 18,11). Even the coming of the Lord in judgment on the Day of the Lord is correlated with clouds (Joel 2,2; Nah 1,3; Zeph 1,14).

Other references to clouds in the OT do not connote the appearance of any other being. They refer to clouds in the sky (Gen 9,13; Job 7,9; 37,11), a cloud of incense (Ezek 8,11), mist that quickly passes away, and to coming judgment (Hos 6,4; 13,3).

No other being, including angels, appears with clouds in the OT. Thus, the "one like a son of man's" coming with the presence of clouds implies the figure's similarity with the Lord and most likely indicates a heavenly being greater than the angels⁽²⁹⁾.

3. The "one like a son of man" and Cultic Worship

The third similarity to be noted is the word used for service in the OG, which communicates that the service the "one like a son of man" receives is of the nature of cultic worship. After the "one like a son of man" is given authority, v. 14 says that the nations of the earth will serve him. What is significant about v. 14 for the OG translation is the use of the word λατρεύω. In the Greek OT, this word carries the connotation of service within the

⁽²⁸⁾ A. FEUILLET, "Le Fils de l'homme de Daniel et la tradition biblique", *RB* 60 (1953) 187-189. See also W. BITTNER, "Gott-Menschensohn-Davidsohn. Eine Untersuchung zur Traditionsgeschichte von Daniel 7,13f.", *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 35 (1985) 349-351. Cf. M. BLACK, "Die Apotheose Israels: eine neue Interpretation des danielischen „Menschensohns“", *Jesus und der Menschensohn*. Für Anton Vögtle (eds. R. PESCH – R. SCHNACKENBURG) (Freiburg 1975) 97.

⁽²⁹⁾ Cf. LACOCQUE, *Daniel*, 137; C.C. CARAGOUNIS, *The Son of Man*. Vision and Interpretation (WUNT 38; Göttingen 1986) 71-72; C. ROWLAND, *Open Heaven*. A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity (London, 1982), 181-182. Caragounis (*Son of Man*, 74) states that the clouds create a "serious obstacle" for equating the one like a son of man with the holy ones and that "clouds are bearers of the divine presence."

context of religious duties or cultic practice⁽³⁰⁾. This can be seen especially in Exodus and Deuteronomy⁽³¹⁾. For example, in Exod 3,12, the sign given to Moses at the burning bush is that once the Lord has brought his people out of Egypt, they will worship (λατρεύσετε) him on that mountain. In Daniel, the word λατρεύω is connected with cultic worship and is used nine times⁽³²⁾. The first three (3,12.14.18) refer to the worship of the statue Nebuchadnezzar set up. The next five refer to the worship of God by Daniel or his friends, and the final use is in reference to the “one like a son of man” in 7,14⁽³³⁾. In the NT, service in worship is clearly the meaning of λατρεύω⁽³⁴⁾.

By using the word λατρεύω to refer to the service given to the “one like a son of man”, the OG may be indicating that the “one like a son of man” will receive worship that is similar to the cultic worship given to God elsewhere in Daniel. The implication of Dan 7,13-14 in the OG is that this figure that looks like a human is something more than human.

4. The “one like a son of man” and “the Standing Ones”

Fourth, those standing before the Ancient of Days in v. 10 approach the “one like a son of man” in v. 13d and appear to stand before him creating a further similarity with the Ancient of Days. For 7,13d, Papyrus 967 reads: καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτῷ, while Codex 88 has καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες παρήσαν αὐτῷ. The οἱ παρεστηκότες (“the ones standing” or “the bystanders”) refer to the heavenly multitude of v. 10 that stands before the Ancient of Days. This is highlighted by the use of the verb παρίστημι in vv. 10 and 13⁽³⁵⁾.

Reference to the standing ones in v. 13d by both Papyrus 967 and Codex 88 indicates that these standing ones approached (προσήγαγον) or came (παρήσαν) to him (αὐτῷ), i.e. they approached the “one like a son of man”. In the Aramaic text and Θ on the other hand, the standing ones present the “one like a son of man” to the Ancient of Days. In the OG, the approach of the οἱ

⁽³⁰⁾ J. LUST – E. EYNIKEL – K. HAUSPIE, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Part II K-Ω (Stuttgart 1996). In classical Greek, the word referred to a broader semantic range of service. Cf. LIDDELL – SCOTT, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1940 [1966]).

⁽³¹⁾ Exod 3,12; 4,23; 7,16.26; 8,16; 9,1.13; 10,3.7.8.24.26; 20,5; 23,24.25; Deut 4,19.28; 6,13; 7,4.16; 8,19; 10,12.20; 11,13.16.28; 12,2; etc.

⁽³²⁾ Dan 3,12.14.18.95; 6,17.21.27; 7,14. Meadowcroft (*Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 229) says λατρεύω is “preserved for dealings with the divine”.

⁽³³⁾ The use of λατρεύω in the OG is largely consistent with the Aramaic Daniel’s word ܠܬܪܥ which also is used of service to deity in Daniel (Dan 3,12.14.18.28; 6,17.21.27; 7,14). On the other hand, Θ has δουλεύω, the common word for service. There are two occasions where the OG does not use λατρεύω where Aramaic Daniel has ܠܬܪܥ – 3,17 (φοβέω) and 7,27 (ὑποτάσσω), and one occasion where the OG uses λατρεύω and the Aramaic text does not have ܠܬܪܥ – 6,27 (ܕܪܐ). OG Dan 4,37 is a plus, which contains λατρεύω.

⁽³⁴⁾ K.H. JOBES, “Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship”, M. SILVA, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*. An Introduction to Lexical Semantics (Grand Rapids, MI 1994) 201-211.

⁽³⁵⁾ Ziegler emended the text based on a marginal reading in the Syro-Hexaplar to read: καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτόν (ZIEGLER, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 170. Cf. LUST, “Daniel 7,13”, 63). In Ziegler’s emendation, the accusative pronoun suggests that those standing there presented the “one like a son of man”. This is similar to the Aramaic text’s ܕܩܕܡܗܝ ܗܩܪܒܝܗ (“and they presented him before him”). Ralphs and Hanhart (*Septuaginta*, 914) and Ziegler and Munnich (*Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 338) follow the text of Codex 88 (καὶ οἱ παρεστηκότες παρήσαν αὐτῷ).

παρεστηκότες to the “one like a son of man” infers another similarity between the “one like a son of man” and the Ancient of Days⁽³⁶⁾. In v. 10, the Ancient of Days is surrounded by the great multitude standing before the throne. When the “one like a son of man” arrives, the great multitude approaches this figure. Their approach to the “one like a son of man” shows similarity with their position before the Ancient of Days, and it suggests that the son of man figure has a status similar to that held by the Ancient of Days in relation to the standing ones. This portrayal implies both the “one like a son of man’s” exalted state before the οἱ παρεστηκότες and therefore his similarity to the Ancient of Days, but the OG does so without going so far as to claim identity with the Ancient of Days.

Thus, the OG of Dan 7,13-14 depicts the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days in four ways. (1) The son of man figure arrives like the Ancient of Days. (2) He appears on the clouds of heaven, (3) receives service that suggests cultic worship given to God, and (4) is approached by those who stood before the Ancient of Days.

II. The Messianic Characteristics of the “one like a son of man”

Now, while in the OG the Ancient of Days and the son of man figure do share these similarities and the son of man figure seems to be a heavenly figure, there are also indications that this figure has messianic characteristics⁽³⁷⁾. The first messianic characteristic in the OG is that the “one like a son of man” receives kingly authority. Second, he receives an eternal kingdom, and, third, a distinction is made between the “one like a son of man” and the holy ones of the Most High.

1. The “one like a son of man’s” Kingly Authority

The first and most significant messianic characteristic is the fact that in the OG the “one like a son of man” receives kingly authority. The OG has a different list of things given to the “one like a son of man” than the Aramaic text. Whereas Aramaic Daniel and Θ speak of the son of man figure being given dominion, honor, and a kingdom (Aramaic: מלכו, כר, שפן; Θ: ἀρχή, τιμή, βασιλεία); the OG says that he was only given authority. Interestingly, Papyrus 967 refers to it as ἐξουσία βασιλική (“kingly authority” or “royal authority”)⁽³⁸⁾. In Codex 88 and the Syro-Hexaplar version, the word ἐξουσία is followed by a hexaplaric mark and the words καὶ τιμὴ βασιλική (“kingly authority and honor”)⁽³⁹⁾. The OG thus indicates that what is given to the “one

⁽³⁶⁾ KIM, *Son of Man*, 24.

⁽³⁷⁾ I am using the word ‘messianic’ in line with J. Lust’s definition of Messianism (*Messianism and the Septuagint*. Collected Essays [ed. K. HAUSPIE] [Leuven 2004] 142): “Messianism can tentatively be defined as 1. the expectation of a future human and yet transcendent messiah or saviour, 2. who will establish God’s kingdom on earth, 3. in an eschatological era. In a narrower sense, the expected saviour is a descendant of David.”

⁽³⁸⁾ GEISSEN, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108.

⁽³⁹⁾ GEISSEN, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108-109; ZIEGLER - MUNNICH, *Susanna-Daniel-Bel et Draco*, 338. See HOFIUS, “Septuaginta-Text”, 79, n. 27; and KIM, *Son of Man*, 23, n. 38. This appears to be an attempt to bring the OG in line with the Aramaic version.

like a son of man” has to do with kingship and for that reason hints at a possible messianic interpretation of this heavenly figure⁽⁴⁰⁾.

When viewed in relation to the portrait of the Davidic Messiah in Pss. Sol. 17, this implication becomes more convincing.

Pss. Sol. 17,21: “See, Lord, and raise up for them their king, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time which is known to you, o God.”

Pss. Sol. 17,32: “And he will be a righteous king over them, taught by God. And in his days, unrighteousness will not be among them, for all will be holy, and their king will be the Lord Messiah.”

2. *The Reception of an Eternal Kingdom*

Further evidence of the son of man figure’s messianic characteristics can be seen in his receiving of an eternal kingdom. In OG Dan 7,14 (also Aramaic Daniel and Θ), the “kingly authority” which the “one like a son of man” receives is said to be eternal authority that will not pass away (καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἥτις οὐ μὴ ἀρθῇ). The next line states that the son of man figure’s kingdom will not be destroyed (καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ, ἥτις οὐ μὴ φθαρῇ). While the “one like a son of man” is not explicitly said to receive an eternal kingdom, the mention of authority and a kingdom that will not pass away are highly suggestive of an eternal messianic kingdom.

In 2 Sam 7,12-13, God promised David that he would establish one of his offspring, and that the throne of this figure’s kingdom would last forever. 4QFlor 10-12 interprets this promise as referring to the kingdom of the Branch of David, or the Messiah:

“And YHWH declares to you that he will build you a house. I will raise up your seed after you and *establish the throne of his kingdom forever*. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me. This (refers to the) ‘branch of David’, who will arise with the Interpreter of the law who will rise up in Zion in the last days, as it is written: ‘I will raise up the hut of David which has fallen’”⁽⁴¹⁾.

Thus, the son of man’s receiving of an eternal kingdom, coupled with the kingly authority he receives, strongly implies that the OG portrays this figure with messianic undertones.

3. *The “one like a son of man” and the Holy Ones of the Most High*

Thirdly, a distinction is made between the “one like a son of man” and the holy ones of the Most High which suggests that in the OG the “one like a son of man” is a representative ruler of the holy ones rather than merely a symbol for them. Those who argue that the “one like a son of man” is a symbol of the holy ones do so for a few of reasons. First, the primary reason is that the “one like a

⁽⁴⁰⁾ See KIM, *Son of Man*, 25, who says that these phrases “could suggest an identification of the heavenly figure in v. 13 with the messiah.”

⁽⁴¹⁾ Translation from F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*. The Qumran Texts in English (Leiden - Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 136.

son of man" is not mentioned in the interpretation of the dream while the holy ones are not mentioned in the dream. Secondly, both the son of man figure and the holy ones are given a kingdom (v. 14; v. 27), and thirdly, the reception of both kingdoms follows the judgment of the fourth beast both in the dream and its interpretation (vv. 11-12; v. 26). These factors lead some to see a one-to-one correlation between the "one like a son of man" and the holy ones⁽⁴²⁾.

However, this line of argument is based upon the reading of Aramaic Daniel and does not hold up in an examination of the OG text of Dan 7,13-14. In the OG, an explicit distinction is made between the "one like a son of man" and the holy ones in that the holy ones are mentioned in the midst of Daniel's vision prior to the appearance of the "one like a son of man". In the description of the eleventh horn in 7,8, the OG contains the phrase: καὶ ἐποίει πόλεμον πρὸς τοὺς ἁγίους. This phrase is absent in 7,8 of Aramaic Daniel and Θ. Its use in OG Dan 7,8 indicates that the holy ones and the "one like a son of man" are separate characters in the dream, and it therefore calls into question the symbolic interpretation, since the main argument for symbolically equating the holy ones with the "one like a son of man" is that the son of man figure appears in the dream and the holy ones in the interpretation. Thus, the appearance of the "one like a son of man" with his kingly authority and eternal kingdom after the mention of war being made against the holy ones may suggest that in the OG this figure functions as a representative ruler of the holy ones.

III. Conclusion

Examining the portrait of the "one like a son of man" in the OG has indicated some unique characteristics of the son of man figure. This figure is more closely aligned with the Ancient of Days. He is described as having arrived like the Ancient of Days, appearing with the clouds, receiving service due a divine figure, and having those standing before the Ancient of Days approach him. While the "one like a son of man" is similar to the Ancient of Days, there is no indication of equivalency or identification. In fact the giving of authority to the "one like a son of man" implies that the son of man figure's status is different from that of the Ancient of Days.

The OG portrait of the son of man figure also suggests that the "one like a son of man" has a messianic nature. This is most clearly seen in the kingly authority that the figure receives. Other indications include his kingdom that will not pass away and his distinction from the holy ones of the Most High.

It is possible, then, that the interpretation of the "one like a son of man" in the OG may have provided a basis for the more openly messianic and heavenly interpretations of this figure that are found in later Jewish apocalyptic literature such as the *Similitudes of Enoch* and *4 Ezra*.

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⁽⁴²⁾ CASEY, *Son of Man*, 24-25; A.A. DI LELLA, "The One in Human Likeness and the Holy Ones of the Most High in Daniel 7", *CBQ* 39 (1977) 11.

SUMMARY

While studies of the Old Greek (OG) of Daniel 7,13-14 are not uncommon, they are often undertaken as part of a broader examination of the “one like a son of man”. Rarely, if ever, do these studies focus on the description of this figure in the OG version and what readers of this version might have understood of this character. This study is an examination of the interpretation of OG Daniel 7,13-14, and the argument is made that the OG portrays the “one like a son of man” as similar to the Ancient of Days and as a messianic figure.

The Pastoral Purpose of Q's Two-Stage Son of Man Christology

For those who advocate a titular approach for investigating the Christology of a document, Q must seem a particularly impoverished source in terms of its reflection on the person of Jesus. Cullmann, himself a classical practitioner of titular Christology, while privileging such an approach, nevertheless acknowledges that in some ways it creates a false dichotomy between the person and the work of Christ. He states, "The New Testament hardly ever speaks of the person of Christ without at the same time speaking of his work"⁽¹⁾. Thus in discussing the Christology that Q may present, it is necessary to consider both the titles used and the significance it attributes to the work of Christ.

Here it is argued that Q constructs a two-stage Son of Man Christology. The first stage presents a suffering figure whose experiences align with the contemporary situation and liminal experience of the audience of Q. This motif of the shared liminality of the Son of Man and the first readers of Q is a product of the respective experiences of the rejection of theological claims, marginalization of status, a lack of a sense of "place", and a perception of being "stateless" people⁽²⁾. The second stage focuses on the future return of the Son of Man⁽³⁾. It is at this point that group members will receive both victory and vindication. However, these two stages are not always maintained as discrete moments. By employing the title "the coming one", Q at some points collapses this temporal distinction to allow the pastorally comforting message that some of the eschatological rewards can be enjoyed in the contemporary situation of the first readers of Q.

1. Missing Titles

A preliminary survey of the infrequent or non-use of certain titles is both instructive and perhaps a little surprising. Depicting Jesus as "Christ" was, in certain strands of the early Jesus movement, a way of encapsulating messianic hopes and expectations. Admittedly, this title later became transformed into little more than part of a double-barrelled name, but nevertheless its usage remained a constant feature in references to Jesus. This makes its total absence from Q striking. Commenting on the Jewish background of the semantic

⁽¹⁾ O. CULLMANN, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London 1963) 3.

⁽²⁾ For the classic discussion of liminality as a transitional phase see V. TURNER, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage", ID., *The Forest of Symbols*. Aspects of Ndembu Ritual (Ithaca, GA 1967) 93-111.

⁽³⁾ It may be the case that such a two-stage Christology arises from a sense of confusion in the community over the delay of the parousia, see H.T. FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary* (BiTS 1; Leuven 2005) 130. However, while this remains a possible motivation for constructing a two-part Christology, this suggestion is ultimately not provable from the text. Hence it is considered more appropriate to take the Christology of Q as it stands in the reconstruction of that document without speculating about the forces that led to the formulation of such a Christology.

associations of Christ/Messiah language, Tuckett makes the following observation:

There is also the fact that “Messiah” is a very Jewish term, and as we shall see Q represents a very “Jewish” stratum of the tradition, so that the absence of the term from Q is all the more striking. Q’s non-use of the term may be purely coincidental. It would perhaps be rather bold to deduce from the non-use of the term in Q that the idea of Jesus’ “Messiahship” was actually problematic for the Q Christians⁽⁴⁾.

Thus while reasons for non-use are not easily explained, the absence of the term from Q is striking. There may be a theological reason for the reservation in using the term, but this is not immediately obvious.

The title κύριος does gain fleeting reference in Q. However, these scattered occurrences need to be viewed against the preponderance of usages in the Pauline letters⁽⁵⁾. In Paul’s writings “Lord” is a preferred and privileged form of address reserved for the use of adherents of his scattered communities about the eastern Mediterranean world. However, in Q the most positive use of the title occurs in Q 7,6, where the centurion requesting the healing of his servant addresses Jesus using the vocative, κύριε. It may be of significance that this form of appellation has been placed on the lips of a Gentile who is seeking a miracle from Jesus. The use of the term in Q 9,59 appears to be little more than a polite form of address⁽⁶⁾. In this sense it may align with the use by the centurion where it connoted a degree of deference, but not necessarily homage. Perhaps the most striking example of κύριος terminology applied to Jesus in Q is double vocative κύριε κύριε of Q 6,46. Here the sense is negative, questioning the attitude of those who make such a plaintive and elevated cry, but their actions do not align with such a declaration, τί δέ με καλεῖτε κύριε κύριε, καὶ οὐ ποιεῖτε ὅ ἄ λέγω; (Q 6,46). This discussion betrays a certain antipathy towards those who use this title, but who, at least from the perspective of the one who penned this question, fail to do what they have been instructed by Jesus. This appears to show that Q considers the faith of those who use this title as being defective, at least in some sense. Consequently, this scepticism about groups of Christians who use the title

⁽⁴⁾ C.M. TUCKETT, *Q and the History of Early Christianity*. Studies on Q (Edinburgh 1996) 214.

⁽⁵⁾ The title κύριος is used in Q on thirteen occasions: Q 6,46; 7,6; 9,59; 12,42.43.45.46; 13,25; 14,21; 19,15.16.18.21. This number is based upon the reconstruction of Q as presented in J.M. ROBINSON – P. HOFFMANN – J.S. KLOPPENBORG (eds.), *The Critical Edition of Q* (Minneapolis, MN – Leuven 2000). Of these thirteen occurrences only the first three refer directly to Jesus, the last ten all occur in Q parables to denote a householder, or other authority figure.

⁽⁶⁾ Although the vital word κύριος is omitted in some important manuscripts of Lk 9,59 such as B* D pc sy^s, its inclusion in the overwhelming majority of the manuscript tradition, $\mathfrak{P}^{45.75}$? A B² C L W Θ Ξ Ψ 0181 ^{f.13} 33 \mathfrak{M} lat sy^{c-ph} co, including the early papyri makes the inclusion of this term the much more likely reading in the Lukan context. The decision of Fitzmyer to omit the term with little discussion appears strange, and perhaps betrays a reliance on the printed text of NA²⁵, J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke* (AB 28; New York 1981) II, 833. However, while the term is the more likely reading in Luke, an even stronger case can be mounted for Q, since the term is found in the Matthean parallel, Matt 8,21.

Lord without the requisite matching actions might explain the almost total reluctance on the part of Q to apply it to Jesus.

One Christological title that Q appears willing to own, albeit sparingly, is “Son of God”. In the context of the temptation story the title is used by the devil on two occasions to question Jesus status (Q 4,3.9), but for readers of this story such an identification as “Son of God” is not meant to be doubted. The second Q context which alludes to this title does not employ the full form, but simply has Jesus refer to himself as “Son” of his Father (Q 10,22). However, in both cases the use is a little unusual. In the first it is provocative. Discussing the conditional statement εἰ υἱὸς εἰ τοῦ θεοῦ, Fleddermann notes, “[t]his clause raises immediately the question ‘Who is Jesus?’ by suggesting that Jesus is the Son of God”⁽⁷⁾. Similarly the echoes of Johannine language in Q 10,21-22, have made commentators question how well the theological perspectives of this passage cohere with the rest of Q. Therefore, the three titles discussed, “Christ”, “Lord” and “Son of God”, offer little insight into the Christological understandings either of the author of Q or those for whom he was writing.

2. *The Present Son of Man*

If the three titles mentioned above suffer from a paucity of use in Q, the same cannot be said for the title “Son of Man”. Connections have been noted between the concept of wisdom and references to Jesus as Son of Man. Tuckett comments upon the example of Q 7,35. He states,

[t]he Wisdom saying in Q 7,35 is immediately preceded by the saying (v. 34) that it is as ‘Son of Man’ that Jesus is experiencing hostility to his failure to adopt an ascetic lifestyle⁽⁸⁾.

Thus there is recognition of the link between wisdom and the suffering Son of Man. Yet within the Q tradition there is another aspect to Son of Man Christology which revolves around the notion of the eschatological disclosure of the identity of this Son of Man figure.

Hence, the term “Son of Man” is multivalent in Q. Thus, as Fleddermann observes, this is reflected in a two-stage Christology which builds upon the understanding of the two comings of the “Son of Man”:

In the past Jesus came as the Son of Man to inaugurate the kingdom of God by his ministry of exorcising, healing and teaching, and through his life of faith, suffering and death. In the future Jesus will come as the eschatological Son of Man to save and to judge and to usher in the definitive manifestation of the kingdom⁽⁹⁾.

Such a distinction is helpful, but it raises the further question of the reason for Q formulating its Christology via this somewhat convoluted two-staged process. Fleddermann appears to allude to a partial answer to this question, although he does not explicitly raise the issue himself. He sees this split

⁽⁷⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 258.

⁽⁸⁾ C.M. TUCKETT, *Christology and the New Testament*. Jesus and His Earliest Followers (Edinburgh 2001) 196.

⁽⁹⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 130.

between inauguration and fulfilment as constructed to account for the parousia delay⁽¹⁰⁾.

The “Son of Man” title occurs ten times in Q⁽¹¹⁾, and of these the final six may be classed as future looking or eschatologically oriented (i.e., Q 12,8.10.40; 17,24.26.30). By contrast the initial four Son of Man sayings refer to Jesus during the time of his earthly ministry (i.e., Q 6,22; 7,34; 9,58; 11,30)⁽¹²⁾. The description of Jesus as “the coming one” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος), complements the Christological understanding of Jesus as the Son of Man in Q⁽¹³⁾. This is also related to the two-stage Son of Man Christology that is central to the sayings source. Thus it is correctly observed by Fleddermann that:

Q first presents Jesus’ coming into the present world as the suffering and homeless Son of Man (Q 6,22-23; 7,34; 9,58), and only then does Q open up a full presentation of Jesus as the future saviour and judge (Q 12,8-9. 40; 17,24.26.30)⁽¹⁴⁾.

By presenting the motif of suffering and homelessness as part of the earthly experience of the Son of Man, the author of Q is presenting a Christology based on humiliation and rejection during the earthly phase of Jesus’ existence⁽¹⁵⁾. Yet this is not solely presented from the third person perspective, but reflects the shared lot of the readers of Q. Thus in Q’s opening reference to the Son of Man such rejection is presented as the shared experience of Q believers. From this perspective the beatitude for the persecuted depicts allegiance to the Son of Man as the cause of rejection:

μακάριοι ἐστε ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς καὶ διώξωσιν καὶ εἰπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν καθ’ ὑμῶν ἕνεκεν τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Q 6,22).

The author of Q strongly signals to readers that this beatitude is concerned explicitly with their own situation and circumstances. This is achieved by the striking change from third person plural addressees in Q 6,20-21, to the second person plural form in Q 6,22-23, thereby moving from the generalized truths of the first three beatitudes that stand in Q to the specific reader-focused address of the final beatitude. Manson draws out the negative side of this beatitude when he states that the readers, whom he labels as “the saints”, must “be prepared to face hostility, opposition and persecution for the sake of the Kingdom”⁽¹⁶⁾. However, this saying also presents a positive motivation for

⁽¹⁰⁾ *IBID.*, 130.

⁽¹¹⁾ These occurrences are Q 6,22; 7,34; 9,58; 11,30; 12,8.10.40; 17,24,26,30.

⁽¹²⁾ See J.M. ROBINSON, “The Son of Man in the Sayings Gospel Q”, *The Sayings Gospel Q*. Collected Essays by James M. Robinson (eds. C. HEIL – J. VERHEYDEN) (Leuven 2005) 405.

⁽¹³⁾ The description of Jesus as “the coming one” ὁ ἐρχόμενος, occurs three times in Q, 3,16; 7,19; and 13,35.

⁽¹⁴⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 131.

⁽¹⁵⁾ At the level of social history the material in Q 9,58 is often seen as reflecting a call to itinerancy. Thus Kloppenborg comments, “The characterization of the Son of Man as one who has ‘no place to lay his head’ (Q 9:58) and the so-called equipment instruction (Q 10:4) appears to privilege a homeless or itinerant lifestyle”, J.S. KLOPPENBORG, *Excavating Q*. The History and the Setting of the Sayings Gospel (Edinburgh 2000) 179.

⁽¹⁶⁾ T.W. MANSON, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London 1949) 48.

enduring such suffering, namely a share in the heavenly reward of the prophets who not only endured their own rejection and persecution, but who are themselves paradigmatic of the rejection faced by Jesus (cf. Q 13,34-35).

By contrast, in the saying of Q 9,58 Jesus refers directly to his own lifestyle⁽¹⁷⁾. Nonetheless, it is fully apparent that this saying is not functioning as a neutral description of the asceticism of Jesus. Rather, the dialogue in Q 9,57-60 is a discourse on discipleship which presents the standards of behaviour to be emulated by followers of Jesus. Again in Q, readers are called to a pattern of discipleship which is to be based on the description of the marginalization and rejection experienced by the Son of Man. Although admittedly here this experience of alienation and homelessness is in some ways self-imposed, by the choice of an itinerant life (ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει), it is also externally generated by the lack of response to the proclaimed message. By contrast, the charge of gluttony and being a drunkard (Q 7,34) is a direct criticism from those who find the libertine lifestyle of Jesus to be disquieting.

Such a linkage between the rejection of the Son of Man during his earthly ministry and the present experience of his followers serves both pastoral and pedagogical purposes for readers of Q. The description in Lk 6,22 employs the verb ἀφορίζω, which, as Bovon notes, “means a separation, more probably religious excommunication from the synagogue than social discrimination”⁽¹⁸⁾. This more detailed description with obvious overtones of formal synagogue expulsion stands in contrast to the vaguer notion of rejection that is announced in Q. At an earlier stage of the Jesus movement the experience of ostracism resulting from allegiance to the Son of Man may have consisted of personal acts of shunning and rejection, rather than formalized debarring from synagogue worship. Yet, just as the acts of rejection were less formalized, so also the Jesus movement had yet to develop a sustained response to such ostracism. The Q document in part may represent an early attempt to respond to such experiences. Part of this response appears to be a celebration of the encounter with those who persecute, based upon the prior sufferings of the Son of Man. Therefore, pastorally readers are shown that there is solidarity with Jesus through suffering. While this may sustain faith in the short term, psychologically in the face of present persecution new religious movements often need to formulate a belief that creates expectations of future reversal⁽¹⁹⁾.

3. *The Coming One*

For Q the “pay-off” for such persecution in its contemporary situation is envisaged as arising from an eschatological unveiling of the true status of adherents to the Son of Man, coupled with an announcement of judgment upon their persecutors. This is achieved primarily through the second stage of the Christological role ascribed to the Son of Man. Yet even in the first section of Q where the Son of Man sayings focus on the earthly ministry of Jesus, the

⁽¹⁷⁾ TUCKETT, *Christology and the New Testament*, 196.

⁽¹⁸⁾ F. BOVON, *A Commentary on Luke 1:1–9:50* (Minneapolis, MN 2002) 227.

⁽¹⁹⁾ On the way in which new religious movements operate in tension with the prevailing sociocultural environment see W.S. BAINBRIDGE, *The Sociology of New Religious Movements* (New York – London 1997) 31-59.

complementary use of the description “the coming one” allows a preliminary announcement of the eschatological role of this figure. The first time the title “coming one” occurs is in the description of the future baptism (which stands in contrast to the water baptism of John) which will be administered through the element of spirit and fire, αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ (Q 3,16). Although Fleddermann refers to this text as a “salvation-judgment oracle” he appears to find the salvific component only in the spirit element of baptism, “[b]aptism in the Holy Spirit refers to the Spirit as God’s eschatological agent for salvation”⁽²⁰⁾. By contrast “fire” is viewed as being associated almost exclusively with judgment. Thus Fleddermann states “[b]aptism in fire refers to judgment as the second relative clause points out (Q 3,17)”⁽²¹⁾. However, it is debatable whether the twin agents, spirit and fire, can have their functions so neatly split. Instead it appears that the coming one brings two elements that are together the agents of affirmation and purification to effect salvation⁽²²⁾, but simultaneously function to convict and destroy those who do not receive the message, thereby acting as the agents of judgment.

The occurrence of the title “the coming one” is linked to the proclamation of the Baptist in its initial use, when John announced the arrival of the eschatological figure (Q 3,16). The second occurrence also involves John. While languishing in prison according to the Matthean context (Matt 11,2), but simply as a query of clarification according to Luke (Lk 7,18, probably closer to the original Q wording) John seeks assurance concerning Jesus’ identity as the coming one. The response given by Jesus is allusive, and the catalogue of activities drawn from Isaianic passages do not readily fit into a hitherto known set of Messianic expectations. Rather, this passage seems to be the most obvious example in Q where the two-stage Christology is collapsed into a single moment of self-revelation. As Tuckett comments,

[t]he Q passage [Q 7,22] thus presents Jesus in more general terms as the bringer of the expected new age, and as the medium through whom the conditions of the new age were being established in his own ministry⁽²³⁾.

At this moment of inner doubt expressed by John, the author effectively compresses the distinction between eschaton and present in order to offer a word of comfort, albeit a somewhat veiled and ambiguous description, concerning the identity of Jesus as the future coming one.

The final explicit description of Jesus as the coming one, occurs after Son of Man terminology has begun to be used in an eschatological manner (Q 12,8.10.40). As part of his lament over Jerusalem, Jesus announces that he will not be seen in the future until the city confesses εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (Q 13,35, cf. Ps 117,26a LXX). Although this phrase occurs in the triple tradition (Matt 21,9b// Mark 11,9c//Lk 19,38; cf. Jn 12,13b), this memorable doxology from the Psalms appears to have been used

⁽²⁰⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 231.

⁽²¹⁾ *IBID.*, 231.

⁽²²⁾ The classic expression of fire as a purifying salvific agent is to be found in 1 Cor 3,13-15.

⁽²³⁾ TUCKETT, *Christology and the New Testament*, 194.

in Q 13,35 independently of the Markan tradition. The tradition here speaks not of external judgment being visited upon Jerusalem, but of the city's barrenness arising from its unwillingness to be receptive to the coming one. The perspective is futuristic, but it is an inceptive future perspective which depends on a change of attitude to bring about a future state of blessing. Viewing Q 13,34-35 primarily as a wisdom saying, Robinson sees the ultimate rejection of Jerusalem as a self-inflicted fate stemming from its own rejection of the prophets.

Here the withdrawal of Sophia is put into apocalyptic context of the future judgment by Jesus the son of humanity at his parousia. The judgmental apocalyptic context has appropriated the Deuteronomic view of history as consisting of the repeated rejection of the prophets until in the end Israel is itself rejected⁽²⁴⁾.

Robinson helpfully highlights the Deuteronomistic element in this saying, but it is less clear whether it is a bleak prophecy of inescapable judgment, or whether there is a more open attitude to the possibility of repentance for the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the final judgment. While this Q passage provides little reflection on how such sentiments relate to contemporary believers, it does exhibit a sense of triumphalism in relation to the certainty of the fate of Jerusalem as being linked to its response to the coming one.

4. *The Future Son of Man*

Against this wider context of Son of Man statements that relate to the earthly ministry and the preliminary survey of the portrayal of the figure described as the coming one, it is possible to investigate Son of Man sayings that have a future aspect. These occur in three blocks of Q material: (i) the exhortation to fearless preaching, Q 12,2-12; (ii) the unexpected return of the Son of Man, Q 12,40; and (iii) the apocalyptic discourse, Q 17,23-35.

Set in a juridical context, the first future reference to the Son of Man is in relation to this figure's reciprocal confession or denial in the eschaton of those who either confess or deny Jesus in their present situation. While both Bultmann and Tödt argue that this saying creates a distinction between the figures of Jesus and the Son of Man⁽²⁵⁾, Fleddermann critiques this interpretation for failing "to deal adequately with the parallelism of the saying"⁽²⁶⁾. Moreover, there is a further parallelism between the act of confessing or denying Jesus in Q 12,8-9 and the action of speaking against the Son of Man in the immediately following Q 12,10. The most natural way to read this complex of sayings is by identifying Jesus and the Son of Man as the same figure. Hence public commitment to Jesus during one's life leads to a saving commitment to that individual by Jesus himself in the eschatological age. Thus it appears that the author of this tradition viewed the existence of his audience on two horizons.

⁽²⁴⁾ J.M. ROBINSON, "Jesus as Sophos and Sophia: Wisdom Tradition and the Gospels", HEIL – VERHEYDEN (eds.), *The Sayings Gospel Q*, 128.

⁽²⁵⁾ R. BULTMANN, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (Oxford 1963) 112, 128, 151-152; H.E. TÖDT, *The Son of Man* (London 1965) 55-60, 224-226, 339-344.

⁽²⁶⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 591.

The first is the contemporary situation, in which people are pressed to declare publicly their allegiance to or non-alignment with Jesus. It is perhaps impossible to decide whether the setting is that of the courtroom or the synagogue, and anyway such a division may be a false one reflecting modern institutional separations that are meaningless in the ancient world. Although probably stemming from a later period, the tradition in Jn 12,42 testifies to the existence of certain crypto-Christians who, according to Martyn “had believed in Jesus, but who, in order to avoid excommunication, refused to make a public confession of that belief” (27). While perhaps not as formalized as the conflict behind the Johannine text, it nevertheless appears that for Q the contemporary horizon requires that a call be made to believers to publicly declare their faith and take the consequences that such open confession brings. To cry “Lord, Lord” (Q 6,46) in private is, for the author of Q, a Christologically bankrupt declaration, if this is not also accompanied by a public confession of faith. Such an understanding of the situation of the original readers or hearers of Q is not predicated on any specific proposal concerning social location. The most commonly held theory of a mid first-century Galilean setting for Q (28), would indeed support the case being advanced that the conflict reflected by Q was not as formalized as the that in the fourth gospel, but such a reconstruction is not vital for this discussion. While the reality of itinerancy, economic degradation, and subsistence farming that existed in first-century Galilee would cohere with the characterization of the fate of the followers of Jesus as presented by Q, it is not necessary for understanding the basis of the two-stage Son of Man Christology. Rather perception of status can potentially provide a more powerful stimulus for theological creativity than actual prevailing social conditions. To this extent it is unnecessary to become involved in speculations concerning the hypothetical social location of the community. Rather, the method adopted here is that of engaging in a close reading of the text of Q to ascertain how its Christological message may have impacted on the first readers. Recurrent themes of perceived ostracism and rejection surface in Q alongside the present Son of Man sayings. This gives an important clue that the author of the document understood this motif to be of direct relevance to readers. Such an argument is given greater weight by the fact that, as has been noted, with the final beatitude in the sequence Q 6,20-23 the author changes to a second person plural form of address to speak directly to readers.

Yet there is also a second horizon which according to Q is directly related to those actions taken in the present. Open confession in the present age is seen as resulting in the Son of Man’s positive confession about such individuals in the age to come. Therefore the payoff for suffering exclusion and ostracism in the earthly existence is that one will receive inclusion and welcome in the age that is inaugurated by the Son of Man’s return.

The second reference to the future role of the Son of Man concerns the unexpected nature of his return (Q 12,40). This statement, *ὁμείζ γίνεσθε*

(27) J.L. MARTYN, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (NTL; Louisville, KY 2003) 159.

(28) J.S. KLOPPENBORG, *Excavating Q. The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN - Edinburgh 2000) 214-261.

ἔτοιμοι, ὅτι ἡ οὐ δοκεῖτε ὥρα ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεται, affirms two related “truths” that need to be communicated. First, the return of the Son of Man is viewed as certain. The present tense of ἔρχεται here providing the sense of an imminent return which can be spoken of as if it were already in progress. Second, although certainty about the return is given, the timing is uncertain. This uncertainty is the basis of the hortatory imperative that opens the saying, “be prepared”. Thus the response to the certainty of the return of the Son of Man is not complacency or inaction, but preparation. Although there is debate concerning whether the preceding material in Lk 12,35-38 belonged to Q, there is little doubt that the immediately following material (Q 12,42-46) did. Thus Tuckett observes,

[Q] 12.40 coheres extremely closely with 12.42-46 in terms of subject matter: both concern the unexpected return of the ‘SM’ (12:40)/the master (κύριος) of the story (12:42-46) which will involve potential disaster for those who are unprepared⁽²⁹⁾.

In graphic terms the following parable envisages lack of preparedness in terms of a slave who abuses his fellows during the absence of the master. The fate that awaits such a one appears disproportionate to the offence, but consequently emphasizes the perceived seriousness of that offence. In relation to the use of Son of Man terminology in this context Fitzmyer suggests “the title is being used to depict him in his role as judge of human life”⁽³⁰⁾. Yet judgment language is not found in Q 12,39-40, although admittedly there are acts of vengeance in Q 12,46. In fact, in a striking metaphor, in Q 12,39-40 the Son of Man is compared to a burglar whose unannounced arrival demands concentrated watchfulness.

The last example of future-oriented Son of Man sayings occurs in Q 17,23-35. Here the emphasis falls upon the events that will surround the return of this figure and stylistically the author links this material by repeating the Son of Man title (Q 17,24.26.30). Moreover, as Fleddermann states, “the threefold repetition of the clause ‘so will be the day of the Son of Man’, and the catchword ‘day’ (ἡμέρα) bind the examples together”⁽³¹⁾. The first example states that in contrast to false reports, the actual coming will be indisputable, for it will be as brilliant and visible as lightning (Q 17,24). This statement stands as a corrective to rumours and false expectations about the coming of the Son of Man. The so-called rumours’ saying of Q 17,23 concludes with an injunction against being convinced by such suggestions⁽³²⁾. By contrast the immediately following lightning saying in Q 17,24 declares that the return will not be gradual or progressive, but decisive and instant. Pastorally this warns readers of Q against being caught up in speculations surrounding predictions of return since these are seen as futile because the parousia is presented an event that cannot be missed.

⁽²⁹⁾ C.M. TUCKETT, *Q and the History of Early Christianity* (Edinburgh 1996) 251.

⁽³⁰⁾ FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke*, II, 986.

⁽³¹⁾ FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 830.

⁽³²⁾ The exact wording of Q is somewhat difficult to determine at this point. Fleddermann, (*Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 827) prefers the Matthean form μὴ πιστεύετε (Matt 24,26), whereas *The Critical Edition of Q* (502) tentatively adopts the Lukan form ἢ ἀπέλθῃτε μὴδὲ διώξῃτε (Lk 17,23).

The remaining two Son of Man sayings act as a framing device for the description of events in the days of Noah. Here the narrative sequence in Q probably runs in the following order, Q 17,26-27.30⁽³³⁾:

²⁶καθὼς ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Νῶε, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου·

²⁷ὥς γὰρ ἦσαν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες καὶ γαμοῦντες καὶ γαμίζοντες, ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας εἰσῆλθεν Νῶε εἰς τὴν κιβωτὸν καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ κατακλυσμὸς καὶ ἤρεν πάντας.

³⁰οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀποκαλύπτεται (³⁴).

The story of Noah acts paradigmatically, marrying together the themes of unexpected happenings and judgment. These aspects appear to characterize the way in which Q understands the principal features of the return of the Son of Man especially in terms of the impact upon those who are not part of the community of believers. While the Q community aligns its present sufferings with those experienced during the earthly ministry of the Son of Man, it looks forward to an eschatological vindication with a reversal of fate. In the coming age the persecutors of the community will be swept away like the recalcitrant ones who mocked Noah.

*
* *

The favoured Christological title in Q is Son of Man, but this is not employed in a univocal manner. Q offers a two-stage Son of Man Christology. In the present situation of the author and his audience their experience aligns with the sufferings endured by Jesus who depicts himself as Son of Man (Q 9,58). However, the theology of Q is not just a variant on notions of Stoic endurance. Rather, hope is conceived in terms of future reversal and eschatological vindication. It is here that the future Son of Man sayings offer both hope and ultimate victory to Q believers. The sayings dealing with confession and denial (Q 12,8-9) portray present allegiances as determinative for future destiny. The theme of judgment that is present in this logion also resurfaces in Q 17,26-27.30. In this context the universal nature of that final assize comes to the fore⁽³⁵⁾. The negative aspect of the universal judgment is present in Q 17,26-27, with a fate awaiting non-community members similar to that which befell the majority of people in the days of Noah. However, judgment is not a totally negative concept in Q. In Q 12,8-9 it brings vindication and victory for those who confess Jesus, and the Baptist's

⁽³³⁾ This is the reconstruction offered by ROBINSON, HOFFMANN, KLOPPENBORG (eds.), *The Critical Edition of Q*, 512-519; and FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 827. These two reconstructions agree in the sequencing of the material, although there are minor differences in their respecting wording.

⁽³⁴⁾ For the actual reconstruction of the wording the text presented in *The Critical Edition of Q*, 512-519, has been followed.

⁽³⁵⁾ This universal aspect is seen by Fleddermann as emphasizing the geographical extent of the future activities of the Son of Man. "The final judgment comes upon all everywhere, and both nature and history point to it" (FLEDDERMANN, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, 831).

proclamation of the coming one, who will arrive with the elements of spirit and fire, alludes both to judgment and to purification.

The use of the title “coming one” is important in terms of the two-stage Son of Man Christology, since it creates a bridge that links the present role of the suffering Son of Man with the future role as eschatological judge. This is done not only by creating a link between present and future, although this is part of the mechanism employed especially in Q 3,16-17. Rather, in a more sophisticated way Q also collapses the dimension of time, as history revolves around the coming one in Q 7,22. This is achieved by bringing the eschatological horizon into the present. The author of Q achieves this through Jesus’ reply to the Baptist concerning his own fulfilment of the Isaianic activities. As Bock succinctly notes, “[t]he time of eschaton is evidenced in Jesus’ works”⁽³⁶⁾. This is an extremely important factor in analyzing the way Q formulates its Christology for a liminal and persecuted audience. The earthly ministry of Jesus assures the community that their own sufferings are imitations of those experienced by him as the Son of Man. His future return will be the age of judgment and vindication, when their steadfast confession of Jesus will be rewarded by his confession of the faithful as his own⁽³⁷⁾. Yet these two aspects are not totally polarized. The fact that the eschatological horizon has broken into the present through the ministry of Jesus, means that there is a foretaste of future blessing in the community’s own present. Thus the Christology of Q is formulated with a strong pastoral concern, which addresses the perceived present persecutions of the Q community. Believers are promised future reversal, along with a partial experience of that eschatological future in their present situation.

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SUMMARY

It is argued that Q constructs a two-stage Son of Man Christology. The first stage presents a suffering figure whose experiences align with the contemporary situation and liminal experience of the audience of Q. The second stage focuses on the future return of the Son of Man. It is at this point that group members will receive both victory and vindication. However, these two stages are not always maintained as discrete moments. By employing the title “the coming one”, Q at some points collapses this temporal distinction to allow the pastorally comforting message that some of the eschatological rewards can be enjoyed in the contemporary situation of the community.

⁽³⁶⁾ D.L. BOCK, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1994) 662.

⁽³⁷⁾ The positive aspect of this confession by Jesus on behalf of those who have openly declared their faith is recognized by Valantasis. Commenting on individuals who make such open confession Valantasis notes “Jesus will stand up for them at the last day, giving positive testimony in the eschatological divine court in the presence of angels who surround God’s judgment seat”, R. VALANTASIS, *The New Q. A Fresh Translation with Commentary* (New York – London 2005) 157.

Christ Grown into Perfection⁽¹⁾ Hebrews 9,11 from a Christological Point of View

Heb 9,11, together with the following verse, Heb 9,12, has always been regarded as one of the pivotal sentences of Hebrews, by some as the most pivotal one⁽²⁾. The present paper focuses on the participial construction in Heb 9,11b (see the arrangement of the verse below) with relation to its intended predicate; that is, the focus is placed on the content, syntax and semantics. As a by-product, the reading offered in this paper also provides some insight into the well known text-critical problem of the verse. Since the focus of this paper falls on the content, the arguments offered are related to the text-immanent or 'inner criteria'.

The yardstick of the correctness of an interpretation is, as always, not the categories of true and false, but of meaningful and less meaningful, and the category of meaning is derived from the standard of coherence. In other words, the interpretation that offers the greatest insight into the interpretation of the whole writing can demand greater approval. The truth to be searched for and hopefully found can therefore, however, never be treated as an objective truth but rather as an intersubjective exegetical truth. My approach is based on the observation that a 'soteriological reading' of Heb 9,11 is neither necessary nor particularly meaningful. The *participium coniunctum* παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν should rather be read as a strictly christological statement, meaning thus: '(Christ), arrived as the high priest whose good qualities (virtues) have come into being'.

As an arrangement of some modern and one older translations of verse 11 reveals at a first glance⁽³⁾, there has to date been no agreement regarding the text critical problem, as to whether the ἀγαθά of verse 11b have already

(1) Paper read at a Seminar on Hebrews at the University of Pretoria and at the Colloquium of the North-West University, Potchefstroom. I wish to thank all participants for comments, criticisms and proposals. Errors remaining are solely mine.

(2) A strong exponent of this assumption is A. Vanhoye, prominently in his *La structure littéraire de L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris 1963) 60-64; see also the article by him, "Literarische Struktur und theologische Botschaft des Hebräerbriefes (Teil 1)" *SNTU* 4 (1979) 119-147, esp. 135, or *Structure and message of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Subsidia Biblica 12; Roma 1989) 36-44, see esp. 40a.b. Although Vanhoye's observations of 'perfect symmetry' have been doubted, cf. B.C. JOSLIN, "Can Hebrews be Structured? An Assessment of Eight Approaches", *CBR* 6 (2007) 99-129, 111-112, virtually every attempt to structure the text will arrive at the conclusion that Heb 9,11-12 is located in the centre and part of the main argumentative paragraph.

(3) New Revised Standard Version: "But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come"; King James Version: "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come"; Revised Luther Version: "Christus aber ist gekommen als ein Hoherpriester der zukünftigen Güter"; Münchener New Testament: "Christos aber, gekommen als Hochpriester der (Wirklichkeit) gewordenen Güter"; Nouvelle Edition Geneva: "Mais Christ est venu comme souverain sacrificateur des biens à venir"; Latin Vulgate: "Christus autem adsistens pontifex futurorum bonorum".

11a Χριστὸς δὲ
11b παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν
11c διὰ τῆς μείζονος καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς
11d οὐ χειροποιήτου,
12a τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως,
12b οὐδὲ δι' αἵματος τράγων καὶ μόσχων
12c διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος
12d εἰσῆλθεν ἐφάπαξ εἰς τὰ ἅγια
αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν εὐρόμενος.

The focus of this paper, as mentioned, falls on the first *participium coniunctum* in 11b. This construction consists of an aorist participle (παραγενόμενος) together with the nominal predicative ἀρχιερεὺς determining the main clause Χριστὸς εἰσήλθεν. The aorist is hereby most easily explained as describing the state of completion of Christ's arrival, rather than stressing its anteriority, although Christ's arrival surely precedes his entrance as well. The nominal predicate, eventually, is qualified by an additional genitive-construction (τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν). This phrase is the *crux interpretum*, in terms of textual criticism as well as the contents.

(⁶) The point at issue here is mainly to be found within the debate on the understanding of *δαῖματότος*: is it intended to be understood in the sense that Christ took some blood into the heavenly sanctuary to apply it to the (never explicitly mentioned) tabernacle there (cf. e.g. W.R.G. LOADER, *Sohn und Hoherpriester*. Eine traditions-geschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbrieves [WMANT 53; Neukirchen 1981] 167: "Es gehört zur Typologie, daß Jesus 'mit Blut' ins Allerheiligste eintrat. Deshalb gibt es keinen Grund, *δαῖμα* hier anders zu übersetzen, etwa 'aufgrund von', oder 'kraft'"; similarly GÄBEL, *Kulttheologie*, 285-286) or, rather, in a causal way, i.e. 'because of the blood, that is, his death' (cf. e.g. GRÄBER, *Hebräer*, 151).

It is not the *participium* itself that causes trouble, nor its syntactical or semantical dimensions: *παράγινωμαι* is often found in Biblical literature as referring to an appearance⁽⁷⁾, not connoting any particular appreciation, and is thus simply referring to the arrival of the high priest at the heavenly sanctuary. The noun *ἀρχιερεὺς* does not need further explication at this point either. But what does the *γενόμενοι ἀγαθοί* refer to?

1. Context: The course of events

First, it is presupposed that the *adventus* of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, according to Hebrews, coincides with his death on the cross, which is moreover identified with his self-sacrifice once and for all⁽⁸⁾.

This setting, however, requires that Christ's appointment as high priest precedes this very priestly act, that is, only as the appointed high priest was Christ able to sacrifice. According to Heb 8,4 Christ had not been the priest while he was on earth. Therefore, his appointment has also to be located within this culmination of events at the cross. Finally, one has to take into consideration that Christ's appointment was understood as (the result of) his perfection⁽⁹⁾. The conditions of logic rather than those of chronology impose a course of events that place Christ's appointment as high priest (his perfection) first, followed by his death on the cross (his self sacrifice) and culminating in the arrival at the heavenly sanctuary.

The following overview of the relevant passages will provide some support for this assumption and lead us to an appropriate understanding of the meaning of the *γενόμενοι ἀγαθοί* in Heb 9,11. The motif of the appointment preceding the very priestly act has left its traces all over the book, for instance in Heb 2,9:

βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν
διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον,
ὅπως χάριτι [χωρὶς] θεοῦ ὑπὲρ παντὸς γεύσῃται θανάτου.

Here the preposition *ὅπως* has to be understood – because of the subjunctive *γεύσῃται* – as marking a final clause, namely: that, or: in order

⁽⁷⁾ WEIB, *Hebräer*, 464, overinterprets in stating that the *compositum* itself indicates an “exceeding the earthly high priest’s ministry” (“Überbietung des irdischen Hohenpriestertums”), for in the LXX the appearance or the arrival of (high) priests is already verbalized by *παράγινεσθαι* (cf Lev 14,48; 1 Sam 22,11; 1 Ezra 5,54; cf in the NT: Acts 5,21) without a certain quality of the ministry being connoted (cf. 2 Kgs 10,21; Bel 1,15 where it is used for priests of Baal). For further examples see H. BRAUN, *An die Hebräer* (HNT 14; Tübingen 1984) 265. J.W. THOMPSON, “Hebrews 9 and Hellenistic Concepts of Sacrifice”, *JBL* 98 (1979) 567-578, 569, proposes to understand *παράγινόμενος* as “reminiscent of *γενόμενος* elsewhere in Hebrews... for the event of Christ’s exaltation and installation as high priest”.

⁽⁸⁾ See WEIB, *Hebräer*, 464.

⁽⁹⁾ Some research has been conducted with regards to the character and the use of the motif and concept of ‘perfection’; see, e.g., A.A. AHERN, “The Perfection Concept in the Epistle to the Hebrews”, *JBR* 14 (1956) 164-167; P.J. DUPLESSIS, *TEAEIOΣ*. The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament (Kampen 1959) esp. 206-232 and D. PETERSON, *Hebrews and Perfection*. An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the ‘Epistle to the Hebrews’ (SNTSMS 47; Cambridge et al. 1982). As far as I can see, no-one has ever directly linked Heb 9,11a to the motif of perfection.

that⁽¹⁰⁾ indicating firstly, that something precedes the appointment of the Son as high priest, namely his suffering in view of his death on the cross (τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου) which caused him to be crowned with glory and honour; and it is Christ as the crowned one who tasted death. In the light of the line of thought in Hebrews, in general, this crowning (δόξη καὶ τιμὴ ἐστεφανωμένον) must be understood as his investiture as high priest.

This becomes obvious with regard to the use of Psalm 8 and 110 (109 LXX) in Hebrews. Especially its first two chapters serve as one of the early Christian examples of an interpretation of the ‘messianic’ Psalms 110 and 8 in terms of one another⁽¹¹⁾. The description of the man or a ‘son of man’ (Ps 8,5) as made for a short time / a little while (βραχύ τι) lower than the angels (8,6) and crowned (8,6) was understood as a promise fulfilled in Christ: With regard to Christ it is the Son of Man who was made lower than the angels in order to ‘have put all the things under his feet’ (8,7). Because the fulfillment of the latter part of the promise is not yet visible, the ‘until’ of Ps 110,1 is taken into account. Christ’s reign on earth might still not be established or recognizable, but he is sitting at God’s right hand (Ps 110,1), as high priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110,4). This is already realised, for Christ is now high priest (cf. Heb 1,3). Therefore the coronation of Heb 2,9 — as a realised event — can only be understood in terms of his investiture⁽¹²⁾.

These assumptions regarding the use of Psalm 8 and 110 (109 LXX) are also buttressed by the following verse clarifying the argumentation of the author of Hebrews; see Heb 2,10:

Ἐπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ [sc. God], ...

τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι.

The διά-construction of 2,9 is taken up again, and in a parallel manner the crowning is thus interpreted as a τελειῶσις.

Heb 2,9: διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου [...] ἐστεφανωμένον

Heb 2,10: διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι

These verses furthermore indicate the existence of a certain process of development within which the Son was qualified and perfected for his office as a high priest. This process is mainly characterised as a gaining of compassion through passion, while the character of this perfection is elaborated mainly in Heb 2,17-18.

17: ὅθεν ὥφειλεν κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι,
ἵνα ἐλεήμων γένηται καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν,
εἰς τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ·

18: ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεὶς, δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cf. LSJ, s.v.

⁽¹¹⁾ Cf. S. FUHRMANN, *Vergeben und Vergessen*. Christologie und Neuer Bund im Hebräerbrief (WMANT 113; Neukirchen 2007) 32-42.

⁽¹²⁾ Apart from these inter- and intratextual relations there is also evidence that the appointment of a high priest was related to a certain coronation ritual (Sir 45,12 Aaron receives a golden garland [στέφανος χρυσοῦ ἐπάνω κιδάρεως]; Zech 6,11: the high priest Jesus [Joshua] is crowned with a golden στέφανος).

Here we also find a final clause, indicating that ἐλεημοσύνη and πίστις are attitudes which the Son did not possess before his earthly dwelling; as with his priestly office. Rather, he had to develop these virtues in his earthly life, learning by means of suffering. 2,18 therefore describes the necessity of this earthly dwelling: by being tempted the same way as the believers, he can help them in their temptations.

The general perspective becomes clear when we turn to Heb 5,7-10:

- 7: καὶ εἰσακουσθεὶς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας,
 8: καίπερ ὧν υἱὸς ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν·
 9: καὶ τελειωθεὶς ἐγένετο πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ αἴτιος
 σωτηρίας αἰωνίου,
 10: προσαγορευθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀρχιερεὺς κατὰ τὴν τάξιν
 Μελχισέδεκ.

Here we see: the (pre-existent) Son had to learn (5,8: ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν) in order to become perfected (5,9: τελειωθεὶς ἐγένετο); and as the perfected one he could become the source of salvation, the proclaimed high priest (5,10: προσαγορευθεὶς... ἀρχιερεὺς). Thus, in the preceding chapters it was made clear to the addressees that a process existed which enabled Christ to become perfected, gaining such virtues as compassion and obedience.

In Heb 9,11-12, all these considerations culminate in a certain climax, which has already been announced in Heb 8,1 (κεφαλαίον δέ), but now receives its narrative elaboration: the author takes us to the threshold of the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ arrived as the 'high priest τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν'.

2. Semantics

The common translations, 'high priest of the good things that have come (or to come)' ⁽¹³⁾ are based on an understanding of this phrase as an adnominal genitive of relationship ⁽¹⁴⁾ that refers to the salvific goods ⁽¹⁵⁾, denoting: Christ arrives at the heavenly sanctuary as the high priest who fulfilled or somehow mediated the fulfillment of the goods that were promised, for instance, remission of sins, or, according to the *varia lectio*, he arrives as the high priest who is going to fulfill the promised goods, for instance, the Communion of Saints.

Such a phrasing, however, that consists of an adnominal genitive of relationship, qualifying a priest, is firstly without parallels ⁽¹⁶⁾, so that there is

⁽¹³⁾ See above, n. 2.

⁽¹⁴⁾ For this use of the genitive see F. BLASS – A. DEBRUNNER – F. REHKOPF, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen, 182001) § 162.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf among others WEIS, *Hebräer*, 465, who refers to Heb 9,12.14 for the explication of the 'Heilsgüter', similar to GRÄBER, *Hebräer II*, 145 and, recently concurring, GÄBEL, *Kulttheologie*, 284.

⁽¹⁶⁾ The adnominal genitive of relationship is used in biblical, as well as in non-biblical literature with regard to [high] priests in the following ways, referring to a) the deity which the priest serves, e.g. τοῦ θεοῦ (τοῦ ὑψίστου): Gen 14,18; 1 Sam 14,3; Acts 23,4; Heb 7,1; τοῦ κυρίου: 1 Sam 1,3; 22,17.21; 1 Kgs 2,27; 2 Kgs 13,9 etc.; Δαγῶν: 1 Sam 5,5; τοῦ Βασιλ:

no support for this reading from any external example. This does not demonstrate the usual translations to be wrong, but makes them challengeable. To find an appropriate understanding for the phrase, then, let us consider firstly what is meant by ἀγαθά from a semantic point of view⁽¹⁷⁾.

Ἀγαθόν is a nominalized adjective, derived from ἀγαθός, meaning 'good'. It can, in a singular form, refer to 'the good' in opposition to 'the evil' (cf. Sir 39,3), while in the plural it occurs often in the sense of 'good things' (cf. e.g. Gen 24,10). A special use of the noun is to be found, e.g., in Philo (*Leg.all.* 3,86), who in this special case makes use of the concept τὸ ἀγαθόν in a way which provides insight into its use in Hebrews. Within an interpretation of God's guarantee that Sarah would give birth to a son named Isaac (Gen 17,19) as being a promise of something good Philo explains:

There are some good things which are an advantage to a man when they are realised and present (ἐνία τῶν ἀγαθῶν γενόμενα καὶ παρόντα ὠφελεῖ), such as good health, a sound condition of the outwards senses, riches, if he be endowed with them, a good reputation; for all these things may, by a slight perversion of words, be called good things (λεγέσθω γὰρ ἀγαθά).

Philo then continues:

... all other good qualities have their own separate operation and effect, but joy is both a separate good and a common good (ἡ δὲ χαρὰ καὶ ἴδιον καὶ κοινὸν ἀγαθὸν ἐστίν), for it comes as a crowning one after all the rest – for we feel joy at good health, and we feel joy at liberty and at honour, and at all other such things, so that one may say with propriety that there is not one single good thing which has not the additional good of joy (μηδὲν εἶναι ἀγαθόν, ᾧ μὴ πρόσσεσι χαρὰ).

Another example for the use of ἀγαθόν is to be found in Philo, *Quis div. her.* 98:

But the new blessing which is promised is the acquisition of that wisdom (τὸ δὲ νέον ἀγαθὸν κληρονομήσαι σοφίαν) which is not taught (ἄδεκτον) by the outward senses...

2 Kgs 10,19.21 etc.; τοῦ Ναναίου: 2 Macc 1,15; αὐτοῦ = Μελχομ: Jer 30,19; τοῦ Βηλ: Bel 1,15 et al.; τοῦ Διός: Acts 14,13; b) the place where the priest serves, e.g. (Ἡλίου πόλεως: Gen 41,45; Μαδιάμ: Exod 2,16; οἴκου ἀνδρός resp. φυλῆς καὶ οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ: Jdg 18,19; τῶν ὑπηλῶν: 1 Kgs 12,32; 13,2; 2 Kgs 23,9; οἴκων: Neh 13,4; τῆς πόλεως: 2 Macc 3,9; τοῦ (μεγίστου) ἱεροῦ: 2 Macc 14,13; Luke 22,52; Acts 4:1; c) the people, for what he serves, e.g. αὐτῶν = οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ Ἰουδα: Jer 39,32 (LXX); αὐτῶν = οἱ Χαλδαῖοι: EpJer 1,54; αὐτῆς = τῆς γῆς: Ezek 22,26; τοῦ λαοῦ: Matt 2,4; d) the ruler, under whom he serves, e.g. τοῦ Δαυιδ: 2 Sam 20,26; e) a temporal determination, e.g. τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ: John 11,51; 18,13). Only in Heb 3,1 (ἡ. τῆς ὁμολογίας) the genitive could be understood as referring to 'our agreement' or 'our confession'. This reference is, however, not undisputed; cf. FUHRMANN, *Vergeben*, 75-79.

(17) For the meaning of γενομένων, as aorist participle of γί(γ)νομαι, no thoroughgoing analysis is required. When it is used without a predicate it has to be understood as a complete statement with an existential meaning, e.g.: 'something has become; has happened; came into being; etc...', cf. therefore, besides the relevant lexica, the remarks and further literature in M.F. BURNYEAT, "Apology 30B 2-4: Socrates, Money, and the Grammar of ΓΙΓΝΕΣΘΑΙ", *JHS* 123 (2003) 9-10.

where wisdom is marked as an ἀγαθόν. Philo is, however, not the only authority for this use of the concept.

Lucian, *Tox* 41, for instance, uses it in a quite similar way: Toxaris speaks of Dandamis, who gave his eyes as a ransom for his friend, who had been captured by a victorious enemy, and sums up:

It seemed that our enemies did not take away the most precious of our goods from us (τὸ μέγιστον ἡμῖν τῶν ἀγαθῶν), rather were the noble sentiment and the loyalty to our friends still with us (ἀλλ' ἔτι ἦν παρ' ἡμῖν ἡ ἀγαθὴ γνώμη καὶ ἡ πρὸς τοὺς φίλους πίστις)⁽¹⁸⁾.

The examples of Philo and Lucian provide some insight into a possible understanding of the genitive in Hebr 9,11a: Philo understands the ἀγαθὰ as realised on a person, and in a conspicuously similar manner to Hebr 9,11 γίνεσθαι κτλ. is used to describe the realisation of the ἀγαθὰ (ἐνία τῶν ἀγαθῶν γεγόμενα). The noun is used to describe obtained or received potentialities or capabilities, such as wisdom, and even emotions, such as χαρά. In Lucian's dialogue, in addition to γνώμη, πίστις (cf Heb 2,17) is also reckoned among the ἀγαθὰ. If we apply this understanding of ἀγαθὰ to the syntagm of Heb 9,11, one can consider rendering the genitive attribute τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν in such a way that it designates the realised or completed habits or qualities of the high priest, thereby intratextually referring to those expressions that characterise a development of the preexisting Son into a compassionate (Heb 4,15), merciful (Heb 2,17) and obedient (Heb 5,8) Son and high priest.

3. The frame of reference

The phrase of Heb 9,11 echoes with its reference to the realised or completed habits or qualities, apart from the reverberation of the τελειώσις-motif, the motif of education (Heb 5,8; see in addition 12,4-8 where the Christological interpretations related to Christ's suffering are applied to the suffering of the Church). The author of Hebrews is seemingly a child of his time, for instance in comparison with the educational ideas of Seneca⁽¹⁹⁾. To reach one's destiny, that is "to live in accordance with his own nature (*secundum naturam suam vivere*)"⁽²⁰⁾ we should, according to Seneca,

preferably turn our attention to words like these: No man is good by chance. Virtue is something which must be learned (*nemo est casu bonus, discenda virtus est*)⁽²¹⁾.

This learning consists, if necessary, of suffering, as Seneca points out at another place:

I should prefer to be free from torture; but if the time comes when it must be endured, I shall desire that I may conduct myself therein with

⁽¹⁸⁾ My translation.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Cf. e.g. A.L. MOTTO, "Seneca on the Perfection of the Soul", *CJ* 6 (1956) 275-278.

⁽²⁰⁾ Seneca, *Moral Epistles* (ed. R.M. GUMMERE) (LCL; Cambridge, MA 1917-1925) I, 277.

⁽²¹⁾ Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, III, 435.

bravery, honour, and courage. Of course I prefer that war should not occur [...] The conclusion is, not that hardships are desirable, but that virtue is desirable, which enables us patiently to endure hardships (*ita non incommoda optabilia sunt, sed virtus qua perferuntur incommoda*)(²²).

He sums up:

Nothing is more excellent or more beautiful than virtue; whatever we do in obedience to her orders is both good and desirable (*nihil est virtute praestantius, nihil pulchrius; et bonum est et optabile quidquid ex huius geritur imperio*)(²³).

There is no need to assume a Stoic background for the Epistle to the Hebrews, in particular, bearing in mind the high esteem accorded to συμπαθεία in Hebrews in contrast to the Stoic ideal of ἀπαθεία(²⁴). The example of Seneca's dealing with the matter shows, however, at least, that the idea of development to perfection, in terms of virtues, by suffering and learning was known to the contemporaries of the author of Hebrews(²⁵).

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* *

The genitive attribute is therefore not a genitive of relation, but of quality (*genitivus qualitatis*), and the γενόμενοι ἀγαθοί correspond to those expressions promulgating the idea of the τελείωσις of the Son through sufferings (διὰ παθήματων), as shown above. The phrasing is, obviously, a bit strange and unusual, which might be explained by the following. To describe somebody who achieved a high moral status, a Greek author would presumably have made use of a phrase such as: '[a person] γενόμενος ἀγαθός (a person who became good)'(²⁶), but, of course, there was no lack of goodness in Christ at all (cf Heb 1,2f.). The phrasing of Heb 9,11 enables an understanding of Christ to become perfected — though his goodness is already unparalleled — by certain virtues devolved upon him.

The *participium coniunctum* of Heb 9,11 speaks of Christ's arrival (παραγενόμενος) at the heavenly sanctuary as that of a high priest, perfected through sufferings. This perfection into which he grew, enabled him to become a high priest, for it is a constituent part of his completely different liturgy (Heb 8,6: διαφορωτέρας τέτυχεν λειτουργίας) that he became merciful, reliable (Heb 2,17) and compassionate (Heb 4,15), in order to intercede with God (Heb 7,25) for those in need of it (Heb 2,18; 4,16).

(²²) Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, II, 37.

(²³) Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, II, 45.

(²⁴) Cf. FUHRMANN, *Vergeben*, 106 and M. YARNOLD, "Μετριοπαθεῖν apud Hebr 5,2", VD 38 (1960) 149-155.

(²⁵) See also Plutarch's possibly fragmentary essay 'Can virtue be taught?' (*An virtus doceri possit*, Mor 439A-440C), in volume VI of Plutarch's *Moralia* (ed. W.C. HELMBOLD) (LCL; London - Cambridge, MA 1957).

(²⁶) To mention but two examples: Diodor, *Ant. Rom.* 3.66.1: ἐν τῇ μάχῃ γενομένους ἀνδρας ἀγαθοῦς; or Josephus, *Ant. Iud.* 12.24: Ἰώσηπος ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς γενόμενος.

Therefore, the phrase ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν should rather be read as follows: ‘the high priest whose virtues have come into being’. The *varia lectio* μελλόντων, can be ruled out, being a misunderstanding of the phrase, assimilating the wording of Heb 10,1.

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SUMMARY

The author suggests a Christological reading of Heb 9,11 in the sense that the genitive τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν is understood as a *genitivus qualitatis* referring to the virtues that Christ obtained during his earthly life through his suffering. With regard to the problem of textual criticism, the interpretation argues for γενομένων instead of μελλόντων.

The “Molten Sea”, or Is It?

Scholarly discourse on the huge water basin in the court of Solomon’s Temple has generally revolved around two issues: how to reconcile two conflicting traditions about its size and how it functioned in the Temple cult⁽¹⁾. However, the basin’s name has hardly received due attention. The basin is variously called הים מוצק (1 Kgs 7,23; 2 Chr 4,2), ים הנחשת, “the Sea of bronze” (2 Kgs 25,13; 1 Chr 18,8; Jer 52,17), and הים “the Sea” (1 Kgs 7,24; 2 Kgs 16,17). The term הים מוצק is translated in English Bibles as the “molten sea” (RSV), the “cast sea” (NRSV), the “sea of cast metal” (NASB), the “Sea of cast metal” (NEB), and the “tank of cast metal” (NJPS)⁽²⁾. In these modern versions of the Bible, מוצק is interpreted to be derived from the Hebrew root צק “to cast, pour”. However, based on the following observations, I propose an alternative root verb צק “to constrain, press upon, harass, oppress”, which yields the translation “The Sea has been constrained”⁽³⁾.

The translation “Molten Sea” has little to commend it because the English word “molten” describes not water but metal or glass liquefied by heat. There is a grammatical problem, as well. Hebrew grammar dictates that when a subject noun is definite and the participle is not, the participle functions predicatively⁽⁴⁾. Since הים is definite, the indefinite Hophal participle מוצק cannot be translated attributively. It follows that הים מוצק must be interpreted as a complete sentence, and not as a phrase.

Various factors may have contributed to the mistaken association of הים מוצק with the root צק, rather than with the original צוק. It is possible that the translators were prejudiced by the term ים הנחשת “the Sea of bronze”. This designation, however, suggests either that the Deuteronomistic historian intentionally downplayed the original mythological import of the Sea’s name by deriving it from its construction material, or that the historian did not fully understand the meaning and significance of the Sea’s archaic name הים מוצק. The second suggestion is not difficult to imagine in view of the fact that the

⁽¹⁾ According to 1 Kgs 7,26, the basin’s volume was 2,000 baths whereas 2 Chr 4,5 reports that it was 3,000 baths. For a recent discussion of the size of the basin, see J. BYL, “On the Capacity of Solomon’s Molten Sea”, *VT* 48 (1998) 309-314.

⁽²⁾ Refer to the following translations in major commentaries and dictionaries: the “Sea, cast (of metal)” (M. COGAN, *II Kings*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary [AB 11; 1988] 259), the “molten sea” (C. MEYERS, “Sea, Molten”, *ABD* V,1061-1062), the “cast, or poured, metal sea” (J.L. MIHELIC, “Sea, Molten”, *IDB*, 253), and the “reservoir (of cast metal)” (S.J. DEVRIES, *I Kings* [WBC 12; Waco, TX 2003] 104). Lexica also list the word in question under the root verb צק. BDB, 427; *HALOT*, 428; *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (ed. D.J.A. CLINES) (Sheffield 1998) IV, 269.

⁽³⁾ The word מוצק, a noun from צק, is actually used to refer to God’s constraining of great waters in Job 37,10. The water “in constraint” may mean it is “frozen”. (BDB, 848; *HALOT*, 559; D.J.A. CLINES, *Job 21–37* [WBC 18A; Nashville 2006] 841). For the noun form מוצק, rather than the expected מוציק, compare the following *mēm* prefixed nouns from hollow roots: מועף (Isa 8,23), and מועקה (Ps 66,11).

⁽⁴⁾ B.K. WALTKE – M. O’CONNOR, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake 1990) 260.

Sea, having been dismantled by King Ahaz, already went out of use in the eighth century B. C. E. (2 Kgs 16,17).

The repeated occurrences of the root *יצק* in 1 Kgs 7 (vv. 16. 23. 24. 30. 33. 37), particularly in verse 24, may also have occasioned the association of *הים מוצק* with the root *יצק*. 1 Kgs 7,24, which describes the Sea's cast decorations, deserves particular mention: "Two rows of gourds were cast with its [the Sea's] casting" (*שני מורים הפקעים יצקם ביצקתו*). Note that in the Hebrew phrase *ביצקתו*, it is the suffix, not the noun *יצקה*, that refers to the basin. The noun simply denotes the metal casting of the basin and has little connection with the actual name of the Sea. Thus, the phrase should not be taken as evidence for the traditional derivation of *הים מוצק* from *יצק*.

As for the function of the Sea, the paucity of reliable data renders it difficult to define the basin's use. Strangely enough, no practical function is given in 1 Kings. We only get a glimpse of its application from the Chronicler's sketchy comment that "the sea was for the priests to wash in" (2 Chr 4,6). Given its enormous size, elaborate ornamentation, and the lack of explanation of its function in Kings, the basin's presence was, in all probability, primarily symbolic, and by the time of the Chronicler when the basin no longer existed, its symbolic value was also lost.

It has been shown that the earlier Solomonic Temple, as an earthly replica of the divine abode, was replete with mythological elements, such as the representations of cherubim, lions, palm trees and open flowers (1 Kgs 6,29. 7,36). One is also reminded, in this connection, of the epithets of the altar and of its base in Ezekiel's vision of the new Temple. The altar is given the name *הראל* or *אראל*, the latter being understood to mean "the mountain of God" (Ezek 43,15-16). In addition, the base of the altar is called *חיק הארץ* "the bosom of the earth" (Ezek 43,14). These names, without doubt, have cosmic, mythological resonances. The basin's religious significance in the Solomonic Temple was comparable to that of the altar as suggested by the fact that the basin and the altar were the two most important cultic appurtenances occupying the court of the Temple. Accordingly, the name of the basin should be one that best illustrates the basin's religious and cosmic import as discussed below.

The creator god's conflict with the chaotic force of the primordial waters is well attested in ancient Near Eastern literature. This motif's Hebrew version contains particular allusions to the Sea as Yahweh's primary antagonist in creation. The name *הים מוצק* can be understood against this mythological backdrop. Whether Israelite kingship was sacral remains a moot question. But as regards its related issue of the New Year festival in ancient Israel, many scholars seemingly believe that the Israelites celebrated a festival analogous to the Babylonian Akitu festival during which *Enuma Elish* was recited^(*). In the Babylonian festival, Marduk's overpowering his enemies and establishing an order, as narrated in the myth, functioned to ensure the

(*) P.D. MILLER, "Israelite Religion", *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters* (eds. D.A. KNIGHT – G.M. TUCKER) (Philadelphia 1985) 220-222; J.J.M. ROBERTS, "Mowinckel's Enthronement Festival: A Review", *The Book of Psalms. Composition and Reception* (ed. P.W. FLINT ET AL.) (Leiden 2005) 97-115.

dynasty’s peace and prosperity⁽⁶⁾. In a similar vein, the recitation of Yahweh’s cosmic victories over the Sea, symbolized by the huge basin in the Temple, would have reminded the audience of the divine power and presence, ensuring the security and stability of the Davidic dynasty as indicated in one of the so-called enthronement psalms: “I will set his [the king’s] hand upon the sea, his right hand upon the rivers” (Ps 89,26 [E 25])⁽⁷⁾. The visual image of the great amount of water contained in the reservoir may also have evoked the notion of the restrained and subdued power of the Sea. Therefore, the role of the basin often deemed obscure emerges as pivotal. A prominent ritual formula in these psalms is יהוה מלך or מלך יהוה “Yahweh has become king”⁽⁸⁾. I suggest that הים מוצק should be seen as one such cultic proclamation declared during the New Year festival and should be translated “The Sea has been constrained!”

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SUMMARY

Contrary to the conventional rendering of הים מוצק (1 Kgs 7, 23), the name of the huge water basin in the Solomonic Temple, as the “Molten Sea”, the author suggests that הים מוצק should be seen as one of the cultic proclamations declared during the New Year festival and should be translated “The Sea has been constrained!”

⁽⁶⁾ It is telling that Tiamat could represent *mat tâmti* “the land of Tâmti”, the main opponent of Babylon in the early second millennium B.C.E. T. JACOBSEN, “Religious Drama in Ancient Mesopotamia”, *Unity and Diversity. Essays in the History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (eds. H. GOEDICKE – J.J.M. ROBERTS) (Baltimore 1975) 76.

⁽⁷⁾ MEYERS, “Sea, Molten”, 1062; E. BLOCH-SMITH, “Solomon’s Temple: The Politics of Ritual Space”, *Sacred Time, Sacred Space. Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (ed. B.M. GITTLEN) (Winona Lake 2002) 84.

⁽⁸⁾ So translates Mowinckel, as opposed to “Yahweh reigns” or “It is Yahweh who is king”. See ROBERTS, “Mowinckel’s Enthronement Festival”, 105-108.

Psalm 149,5: “they shout with joy on their couches”

The Book of Psalms ends in a collection of five hymns, each of them opening with ‘hallelujah’ (י). These are clearly late texts. Psalm 146 shows its late origin in the use of northern or Aramaic words (2) and its dependence on earlier texts (3). Psalm 147, too, has references to older texts (4); in vv. 2.13 this psalm speaks of the return from exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Psalm 148 refers to Israel’s restoration in v. 14, and has an expression apparently current since the Persian period in v. 6b (cf. Esth 1,19; Dan 6,9.13) (5). Psalm 149 repeats, in its opening verse, essential notions from Ps 148,14 (חַדְלָה, ‘praise’; חֲסִידִים, ‘faithful’) (6), while, similar to Psalm 148 once more, it has לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו, ‘for all his faithful’, at the end of the text. In its use of words this psalm also reminds one of Isaiah 60-61 (7). Psalm 150 must have been intended to conclude the hallelujah-psalms, and probably the whole psalter as well. In view of all this, it can be assumed that the collection dates from the later post-exilic period, partly perhaps from the Hellenistic time.

I

Psalms 146-148 praise YHWH’s greatness and goodness. Remarkably, each of these texts ends in a statement indicating, in one way or another, the special status of Israel:

Ps 146,10: “YHWH is King forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations”.

Ps 147,19-20: “He declared his word to Jacob (...); he has not dealt thus with any other nation (...)”.

Ps 148,14: “He has exalted the horn of his people: matter of praise for all his faithful, for Israel’s children, those close to him”.

The sentiment expressed in these statements culminates in Psalm 149, which in its second part describes the punishment inflicted by YHWH’s worshippers on the nations and their rulers. The manner in which the faithful are to carry out the judgement (8) is indicated in v. 6: “High praises of God are in their throats and a two-edged sword is in their hands”. Some read ו in חֲדָרֵם

(1) The Septuagint has ‘hallelujah’ only in Ps 150 at the end of the text. Presumably it is a later addition at the end of Pss 146-149.

(2) See *in* vv. 3.5; *עֲשֵׂהָן* in v. 4; *שֹׁרֵר* in v. 5; *נִקְהָ* in v. 8.

(3) See especially vv. 2 (cf. Ps 104,33), 6a (cf. Exod 20,11; 6aα = Ps 115,15b etc.), 7b.8a (cf. Isa 42,7), 10b (cf. Isa 52,7b).

(4) See vv. 1 (cf. Ps 135,3), 8b.9a (cf. Ps 104,14), 11 (cf. Ps 33,18).

(5) D.R. HILLERS, “A Study of Psalm 148”, *CBQ* 40 (1978) 326.

(6) Cf. E. ZENGER, “Durch den Mund eines Weisen werde das Loblied gesprochen” (Sir 15,10). *Weisheitstheologie im Finale des Psalters Ps 146-150, Auf den Spuren der schriftgelehrten Weisen*; Festschrift für Johannes Marböck (Hrsg. I. FISCHER u.a.) (BZAW 331; Berlin 2003) 147-148.

(7) See L.C. ALLEN, *Psalms 101-50*, revised (WBC 21; Nashville, TN 2002) 397.

(8) *עֲשֵׂהָ מִשְׁפָּט*: cf. Ezek 39,21; Ps 119,84.

('and a sword...') as *Waw adaequationis*. This understanding is defended at length by R.J. Tournay, in whose opinion the texts means to say, "Let the praise of God be on their lips, as a two-edged sword in their hand"⁽⁹⁾. Tournay's reading of the text is not very plausible. If in a statement one of the main components directly fits in with the context, while the other can be understood only as serving a comparison⁽¹⁰⁾, the *Waw* connecting the two of them counts as *Waw adaequationis*⁽¹¹⁾. Statements involved are generally maxims, descriptions of recurring situations; they are characteristic of the wisdom literature. Ps 149,6, however, is part of a hymnic text referring to an historical state of affairs. Should this text, nevertheless, express a comparison, then, as far as I can see, only Ps 125,2 would offer a good analogy. In that text, however, the component serving for comparison comes first — as is predominantly the case⁽¹²⁾. Moreover, the situation indicated by this component is as real as the one expressing what the text is really about. So, taken as a comparison, Ps 149,6 would probably say, "Like the praises of God in their throats is the two-edged sword in their hands"⁽¹³⁾. This reading is in its tenor similar to the traditional one, while the context does not require it.

Unquestionably, the psalm speaks of real punishment and revenge (v. 7). As chains and fetters (v. 8) are mentioned alongside the sword (v. 6b), the action indicated seems to aim at subjection (cf. Isa 60,10-12; also 45,14). The subjection of the nations will be a realization of the divine judgement on them⁽¹⁴⁾ and evidence, once more, of YHWH's pleasure in his people Israel (v. 4). It will be glory for YHWH's faithful (v. 9b, cf. v. 5a).

II

The repeated לָהֶם ('their') in v. 6 shows the passage of vv. 6-9 to be connected with v. 5. In that verse, the element $\text{עַל־מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם}$, 'on their couches', is problematic. Some authors suspect that the text is corrupted here. As handed down, however, it is supposed by the Septuagint. Of those who keep to

⁽⁹⁾ R.J. TOURNAY, "Le Psaume 149 et la 'vengeance' des pauvres de YHWH", *RB* 92 (1985) 349-358. Tournay's view is theologically motivated. Those reading the *Waw* simply as a conjunction ('and') are said to be caught in "une lecture superficielle", "rendant difficile l'usage d'un tel psaume dans une liturgie de paix et de pardon, d'accueil et de fraternité" (pp. 349-350).

⁽¹⁰⁾ The other main component may be bipartite. See Prov 25,20.

⁽¹¹⁾ See the texts mentioned in W. GESENIUS – E. KAUTZSCH, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Leipzig 1899) § 161a; A.B. DAVIDSON, *Hebrew Syntax* (Edinburgh 1901) § 151; F. BROWN – S.R. DRIVER – Ch.A. BRIGGS, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Based on the Lexicon of William Gesenius (Oxford 1906) 253 sub j. Not all the texts mentioned do express a comparison; see J. SAUTERMEISTER, "Psalm 149,6 und die Diskussion über das sogenannte *waw adaequationis*", *BN* 101 (2000) 69-75. G. VANONI, "Zur Bedeutung der althebräischen Konjunktion *w*. Am Beispiel von Psalm 149,6", W. GROSS u.a. (Hrsg.), *Text, Methode und Grammatik*. Wolfgang Richter zum 65. Geburtstag (St. Ottilien 1991) 561-576, rightly denies that וְ , used as *Waw adaequationis*, is equivalent to 'as'. It can often be rendered by 'so'.

⁽¹²⁾ Exceptions are Job 5,7; 12,11.

⁽¹³⁾ V. 6 is taken as an independent statement, in accordance with Tournay's translation in the English summary.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The notions vengeance, punishment (v. 7) and judgement (v. 9) are apparently of the same level; therefore v. 9a is likely to be coordinate with vv. 7-8.

the massoretic text, some believe that מִשְׁכָּב is used in a somewhat uncommon sense. On the assumption that the situation in vv. 5-9 is the same as that intended by the appeals in vv. 1-3, it has been suggested that מִשְׁכָּב refers to the place of prostration, fitted with some sort of cloth⁽¹⁵⁾. However, a meaning like that is not attested anywhere else. On account of the usage in Isa 57,2, Ezek 32,25, 2 Chr 16,14, and Phoenician and Palestinian inscriptions, the sense of 'grave' been proposed⁽¹⁶⁾. The meaning of v. 5 would be then that the faithful shout with joy above their graves — which could implicate the belief in resurrection (cf. Wis 3,7-8). The drawback of this interpretation is that על, in relation to מִשְׁכָּב, always means 'upon', never 'above': people are 'on their couches' (see e.g. Lev 15,23.26; 2 Sam. 4,11). In Isa 57,2, too, regarding the deceased righteous, על-מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם is likely to have that meaning. In all probability מִשְׁכָּב does not denote the grave itself there, but rather a bench or couch (2 Chr 16,14) in the grave⁽¹⁷⁾.

There are those who read מִשְׁכָּב simply as 'couch' or 'bed'. It has been suggested that vv. 5-9 picture the state of mind of the faithful when they rest after a victory⁽¹⁸⁾. In the Maillot-Lelièvre commentary it is supposed that the couches or beds are occupied by the sick and the old, who cannot take part in the dance (v. 3)⁽¹⁹⁾. A. Weiser imagines a celebrating crowd that 'camps' in the temple⁽²⁰⁾. M.D. Goulder thinks that the festival of Sukkoth could be celebrated, in times of military successes, with victory processions and sword dances; between the celebrations YHWH's worshippers might take a rest on their bed-rolls in the temple court⁽²¹⁾. E.J. Kissane, separating vv. 7-9 from v. 6, reads vv. 5-6 to the effect that Israel, faithful to YHWH and once more a strong nation, feels secure⁽²²⁾. None of these interpretations is satisfying. The psalm does not speak of a victory or victory processions. No old or sick people are mentioned. Worshippers 'camping' in the sanctuary or sleeping there on their mattresses are unknown in the Old Testament. As for Kissane's explanation, the divine vengeance is often pictured as executed by the sword

⁽¹⁵⁾ Thus e.g. TOURNAY, "Psaume 149", 356; ALLEN, *Psalms 101-50*, 400.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Thus N. FÜGLISTER, "Ein garstig Lied – Ps 149", (Hrsg. E. HAAG – F.L. HOSSFELD), *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn. Beiträge zur Theologie der Psalmen. Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag von Heinrich Gross* (Stuttgart 1987) 101-103. See also E. BEAUCAMP, *Le Psautier* (SBI; Paris 1976-1979) II, 313.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Cf. R. RIESNER in *Das grosse Bibellexikon* (Wuppertal etc. 1987) I, 174-176. In Ezek 32,18-32 the idea of Sheol (שְׁאוֹל, vv. 21.27; אֶרֶץ חַיִּים, vv. 18.24; cf. אֶרֶץ חַיִּים in vv. 23 etc.) is combined with that of the graves (vv. 25.26). So the image of the underworld מִשְׁכָּב is probably similar here to that of a couch in the grave. Cf. D.I. BLOCK, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48* (NIC; Grand Rapids, Mich., etc. 1998) 227.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See F. BAETHGEN, *Die Psalmen* (HK II/2; Göttingen 1904) 437; F. NÖTSCHER, *Das Buch der Psalmen* (EB IV; Würzburg 1959) 311.

⁽¹⁹⁾ A. MAILLOT – A. LELIÈVRE, *Les Psaumes. Traduction nouvelle et commentaire* (Paris 1961-1969) III, 264. Translation: "... que même alités ils crient leur joie!"

⁽²⁰⁾ A. WEISER, *Die Psalmen. Übersetzt und erklärt* (ATD 14-15; Göttingen 1963) 581.

⁽²¹⁾ M.D. GOULDER, *The Psalms of the Return* (Book V, *Psalms 107-150*). Studies in the Psalter IV (JSOT.S 258; Sheffield 1998) 298-300. H. GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen. Übersetzt und erklärt* (HK II/2; Göttingen 1926) 620, reading מְרִיכֹת instead of מִשְׁכְּבוֹת, was the first to suggest that v. 6b is about a sword dance.

⁽²²⁾ E.J. KISSANE, *The Book of Psalms. Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text. With a Commentary* (Dublin 1953-1954) II, 334. See also BEAUCAMP, *Psautier*, II, 313-314.

(vs. 6b)⁽²³⁾, while the transition from v. 6b to the infinitives with ל in vv. 7-9 has analogies in e.g. Exod 5,21; Jer 15,3. So, apparently, v. 6 and vv. 7-9 belong together.

The 'couches' have been taken as part of a merism: in private ('on their couches') as well as in public ('in the assembly of the faithful'), YHWH's servants should rejoice in their King⁽²⁴⁾. This interpretation, too, meets with objections. Since in a merism the terms expressing a totality use to be connected by conjunctions ('and', 'also') or joined as a word pair in poetic parallelism, the terms 'assembly' and 'couches', separated by three verses, can hardly function in the supposed manner. Then again, it is unclear why precisely the couches of the faithful are mentioned instead of, for example, their houses (cf. Deut 6,7). Most importantly, the proposed reading does not explain the connection between vs. 5 and vv. 6-9.

III

Verse 5 is clearly the opening of a new scene. In this verse, the 'couches' can be understood from a literary tradition in which resting time, particularly that of the night (לילה) or the watches of the night (אשמרות), is a time of intensified spiritual activity and receptivity. This is the time when YHWH's servants may yearn for their God, seek him (Isa 26,9), remember his 'name' (Ps 119,55), meditate on his ways of acting (Ps 77,7), pour out their hearts before him (Lam 2,19) — a time of prayers and of praises (Ps 42,9; 119,62; Job 35,10). It is also the time when YHWH may give counsel and instruction (Ps 16,7), the time when a human being, 'immensely distinguished', can be 'with God' (Ps 139,11-12.14.18)⁽²⁵⁾. Statements about activities and experiences like these may mention not only a time (the night, watches of the night), but also a place — which usually is the משכב, 'place of lying down, couch', sometimes indicated by a synonym: מטה, 'place of reclining, bed', ערש, 'couch' or 'divan', יצועים, 'that which is spread, resting-place'. The suppliant thinks of God on his resting-place (יצועים) in the watches of the night (Ps 63,7). He may flood his bed (מטה) with tears every night, drench his resting-bench (ערש) with his weeping (Ps 6,7). Sometimes, in a dream, a vision of the night, when people slumber on their couches (משכב), God may open their ears and give them serious warnings (Job 33,15-18). The young woman, on her couch (משכב) at night, finds herself seeking the one whom she loves (Cant 3,1). In some comparable texts only the sleeping-place, משכב, is mentioned, not the night. On their couches people wail (Hos 7,14), talk to themselves in agitation (Ps 4,5), devise evil things (Mic 2,1; Ps 36,5).

Ps 149,5 has its closest analogy in Cant 3,1. Both in Canticles 3 and Psalm 149 an action does not agree, seemingly, with its location: the young woman,

⁽²³⁾ See e.g. Isa 34,5; Jer 25,16; 46,10; 50,35-38; Ezek 29,8; Zeph 2,12.

⁽²⁴⁾ Thus A.R. CERESKO, "Psalm 149: Poetry, Themes (Exodus and Conquest), and Social Function", *Bib* 67 (1986) 186-187, following the 19th-century exegete F.J.V.D. MAURER ("Tam privata quam publica omnium sit laetitia"). In essence also W.S. PRINSLOO, "Psalm 149: 'Praise Yahweh with Tambourine and Two-edged Sword'", *ZAW* 109 (1997) 403.

⁽²⁵⁾ See Th. BOOIJ, "Psalm cxxxix: Text, Syntax, Meaning", *VT* 55 (2005) 1-19.

in her bed, is seeking her beloved; the faithful, in their beds, are to punish the nations. The solution of the paradox is in the subjects' state of experience. In the young woman's case this is a dream, probably. In the case of the faithful it may be a dream as well, or just imagination. The faithful, if observed on their couches, would utter no praises and wield no swords. In their minds, nevertheless, the praises are loud (cf. Isa 58,1) and the swords extremely dangerous (cf. Judg 3,16.21-22; Prov 5,3-4.9). The fierceness and the threat of the scene make one think of the texts mentioned in the above paragraph at the end (Hos 7,14 etc.). So it is not by chance perhaps that the action is connected with a place alone (v. 5). On this point too, the author, consciously or unconsciously, may have followed a literary convention.

In all likelihood, considering v. 9a, the images of vv. 6-9 are based on prophetic sayings⁽²⁶⁾. Historical events, however, are their breeding ground. The return from exile, the restoration of the national community, and the steady rebuilding of Jerusalem made Israel experience the greatness and goodness of its God. From that experience the sense of joy, pride and power was born which is expressed in the metaphor of the rising horn in Ps 148,14, leading to the vision of a glorious retribution in Ps 149,6-9.

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SUMMARY

Ps 149,5 can be understood from the literary motif of intensified spiritual activity and receptivity in resting time, particularly in the night. Formally, the statement of this verse is related to Cant 3,1. In vv. 5-9 the psalm describes the feelings and mental images of YHWH's faithful with regard to a future judgement on the nations. The consciousness of Israel's special position, expressed in the preceding hallelujah-psalms as well, is brought to a climax.

⁽²⁶⁾ See esp. the oracles concerning foreign nations. Israelites may be the instrument for carrying out the judgement; see Ezek 25,14; Obad 18.21; Mic 4,13; 5,7-8; Zech 9,13-15; 12,6. Cf. דכחוב in Sir 48,10.

From Babel to the New Jerusalem (Gen 11,1-9 and Rev 21,1–22,5)

It is a well known truism for Christians that the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. Many an author has specifically argued that the protological texts of the first book of the Bible find their fulfilment in the eschatological texts of the last book of Scripture. A comparative reading of the apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (Rev 21,1–22,5) and of the narrative of the city/tower of Babel (Gen 11,1-9) brings to the fore a number of stunning parallels.

No commentator has offered any further illumination on the archetypal relationship between those two cities⁽¹⁾. And so, the intent of this study is to confront the project of Babel, Gen 11,1-9, with the Holy City, Rev 21,1–22,5, seeking to shed more light on this link. Obviously, we will have to be selective in our choice of parallels given the literary limitations of the present exposition. Methodologically speaking, we will compare the two texts from a synchronic and biblico-theological angle.

For a background it is beneficial to understand that Gen 11,1-9 aims to construe the diversity of peoples and languages as a chastisement for a collective sin of pride. Since all peoples were descended from the family of Noah, linguistic diversity required some explanation, i.e. how unity could be transformed into disunity. Nations sinned by refusing to go forth to possess their lands, preferring instead to band together and build a prideful city at a site of their own choosing⁽²⁾. The divine intent that the race “scatter”, or repair to their God-given lands, is repeated in 9,19; 10,5.20.25.31.32. Textually speaking, Gen 11,1-9 employs a restricted vocabulary (לשון, “language”, appears five times in these few lines), and uses a symmetrical narrative device⁽³⁾.

Let us just take stock of some initial points of comparison as we approach the subject. First, Gen 11,1 mentions the uniformity of language on earth; 11,2, then illustrates the migration of peoples toward the earth of Shinar, before they were scattered over all the earth, 11,4.8.9. By contrast, Rev 20,1 describes the definitive “flight” (ἐφύγεν) of that former land, and the appearance of the “new earth” in Rev 21,1. This new creation now becomes the stage of God’s definitive covenant with humankind. Everything seems arranged for the appearance of the New Jerusalem.

Secondly, there is a movement indicated in both texts: while the peoples migrate “from the east” presumably toward the west, Gen 11,2, the Holy City

⁽¹⁾ A. Vögtle merely mentions the connection between the two realities: “Er [John] hat zugleich den Turmbau von Babel als negatives Ur- und Vorbild der Himmelsstadt im Auge” (*Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln*. Die Offenbarung des Johannes in Auswahl gedeutet [Freiburg 1981] 177).

⁽²⁾ Cf. R. BROWN. – J. FITZMYER – R. MURPHY (eds.), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1990) 17.

⁽³⁾ Cf. D. COTTER, *Genesis* (Collegeville, PA 2003) 67.

“comes down out of heaven” towards the earth, Rev 21,2, against the backdrop of a recreated heaven and earth.

The third initial contact between the two texts is the locale. Those pre-abrahamic tribes, as they journeyed from the east, Gen 11,2, came upon a plain in the land of Shinar, Gen 10,10 (i.e., Babylonia; cf. Rev 17). They had not gone far from Paradise, still on their journeys in the east, as repopulating took place after the ravages of the deluge. Their decision to settle contravenes the divine intent to settle people in various lands. Contrary to the plain, the visionary of Patmos observes the descent of the New Jerusalem from the vantage point of a high mountain, Rev 21,10, recalling Exod 19,11 and Ezek 40,2: a traditional site of theophanies in the Old Testament⁽⁴⁾ (unlike the ἐρημος, “desert”, in Rev 17,3). This mountain is a symbol that allows for no topographical precision.

What we notice at this introductory stage is that the textual contacts between Genesis and the Apocalypse are related, yes, but in an order of dissimilarity and/or inversion. Having said that, let us now systematically compare some of the salient components of both narratives.

1. From *Δεῦτε* (Gen 11,3.4) to *Δεῦρο* (Rev 21,9)

In Gen 11,3 the settlers call upon one another with the imperative “Come (הָבִי, דֵּעוּטֵה), let us make bricks!”, and in 11,4 “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens! And let us make a name for ourselves!” This triple incitement points to the people’s resolve to take the initiative in their egocentric quest. They state their purpose: the sacred writer focuses on their motivations, not on what they build. Instead of asking for divine guidance and approval they imagine that they can decide on their own what is best for them. They prefer to be independent of their Maker. The human plan and divine intent are effectively set in opposition by “Come, let us make bricks”, and “Come (דֵּעוּטֵה), let us go down and there confuse their language”, 11,7.

Contrary to this anthropocentric scheme is the picture of one of the seven angels bearing vials and approaching the seer on Patmos, Rev 21,9-10, and gently bidding him: “Come (δεῦρο), I will show you the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb!” This imperative comes through the angel from God, as it were. The enterprise here is divine, while the project has a theanthropic scope, i.e., divine and human: the Holy City.

Looking back over the above, one notices a sharp contraposition between the human aspiration of the campaign of the people of Babel on the one hand, and the transcendent undertaking regarding the New Jerusalem on the other. True and lasting communion of humankind with God can only be God’s initiative, and not ours.

2. From *οἰκοδομήσωμεν ἑαυτοῖς* (Gen 11,4) to *σκηνή τοῦ θεοῦ* (Rev 21,3)

We now turn to the expression in Gen 11,4, “Let us build for ourselves”: The Septuagint well translates the Hebrew original בְּנִינָה לָנוּ, where the

⁽⁴⁾ Certainly evocative of Mount Nebo from where Moses saw the promised land; of the mountain of temptation, Matt 4,8; as well as of the eschatological discourse on the Mount of Olives overlooking the temple, Mark 13,3 (|| Matt 24,3).

reflexive pronoun ἐαυτοῖς, “for us”, betrays a deep-rooted anthropocentric ambition. They desire to be the sole architects of a city/tower meant to serve only those settlers, and thought to satisfy their presumptuous desire for fame and glory. One senses something of the pride of these builders, seeking as it were to rival the supremacy of the Creator of all. But besides than transgressing the limits of their creatureliness in attempting to usurp the place of God, their building also constitutes a bid to secure their own future in isolation, a challenge to God’s command to fill the earth. They understep rather than overstep their human limits.

A glance at the apocalyptic text makes the reader aware of an antithetical difference. The object of John’s vision is not the making of that heavenly City. Its static existence is perceived first, then its dynamic descending movement, thirdly its transit through the heavenly sphere, then its gigantic dimension set against the background of a new cosmos⁽⁵⁾, and lastly its origin in God. Various phrases stress the pristine newness of a city not made by man, Rev 21,2 (τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν Ἰερουσαλὴμ καὶ νήν), adorned by God, 21,2 (κεκοσμημένην)⁽⁶⁾, inhabited by God, Rev 21,3 (ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ), and possessing the glory of God, Rev 21,11 (ἔχουσιν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ). The visionary expresses its holiness and newness by the help of two adjectives, ἁγίαν and καὶ νήν⁽⁷⁾. Therefore, the distinctive feature here is the City’s newness, which can be gathered from the postponing of the adjective similar to Rev 21,1a⁽⁸⁾: a peculiar emphasis is put on the divine, not human, origin.

Intertextually pertinent is the covenantal connotation of ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων as a hapax in the entire Bible⁽⁹⁾ with its nearest analogous occurrences in Josh 24,25; 1 Chr 6,33; Num 10,3; 2 Chr 1,5. As an innuendo to Exod 27,21; 31,7; Num 7,89; 9,15; Matt 8,20; 17,4; Joh 1,14; Act 7,44; Heb 8,2; 9,8.11, it amalgamates ‘tent’, ‘God’ and ‘humankind’: human beings are God’s property, particularly those who are written in the book of life, Rev 20,15. Hence, all those who do not fall under the category of Rev 20,14 will live with God. Does σκηνή refer to the City only or to the entire creation? The context leaves no doubt that it aims in the first place at the descending Jerusalem, because of its immediately antecedent mention. Yet the new heaven and earth cannot be categorically excluded.

⁽⁵⁾ M. Rissi regards the New Jerusalem as a part of the new world, or rather its substantial form, cf. *The Future of the World. An Exegetical Study of Revelation* 19,11–22,15 (SBT 23; London 1972) 57.

⁽⁶⁾ Syntactically speaking, the perfect participles in Rev 21,2b mean both anteriority and contemporaneity with regard to the main verb εἶδον, indicating that the City has been embellished prior to her descent.

⁽⁷⁾ Cf. the “new name”, Rev 2,17; 3,12; the “new song”, Rev 5,9; 14,3. While the Greek adjective νεός means ‘fresh, anew’, the adjective καινός signals an up to date undisclosed newness, cf. J. SWEET, *Revelation* (TPI New Testament Commentaries; London – Philadelphia 1990) 297; “Thus he is not speaking of a new Jerusalem that will supersede the fallen one, but of a new Jerusalem, that will be both the restoration of that city and something far greater”. C.G. GONZÁLEZ – J.L. GONZÁLEZ, *Revelation* (Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville, KY 1997) 138.

⁽⁸⁾ Unlike in Rev 3,12.

⁽⁹⁾ “Auffällig ist das universal gefaßte ‘bei den Menschen’, das die parallelen alttestamentlichen Stellen nicht kennen (Ez 37,27; Lev 26,11; Sach 2,14)” (U.B. MÜLLER, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (ÖTBK 19; Würzburg 1984) 350.

Setting Babel and the New Jerusalem in parallel now, we recognize the utter difference between the short-lived and self-seeking cry “Let us build for ourselves” of the settlers of Shinar, and the tranquil grandeur of a City not crafted by human hands, but having God in its center.

3. From πυργόν (Gen 11,4) to τείχος (Rev 21,12-17)

Gen 11,4 combines the theme of a city and a tower. The context demonstrates that the builders did not intend this tower as a symbol of a mountain to meet God, a place that would express their quest for the Divine. Rather, the sacred author considers the whole project as inspired by morbid pride, a sign of human hubris⁽¹⁰⁾. Tying into this is the actual meaning of the Hebrew noun מגדל, *mgdal*: it is not primarily a “tower”, but rather a “great” or “exceeding” object (stemming from *gadol* which in Hebrew means “great”) with its top in the heavens. Most likely, the inference is that of a giant idol, to set themselves a lasting monument. Moreover, Gen 4,17 portrays Cain as the designer of the first city, which, thereby, is in keeping with his curse: the question then arises, whether Babel continues this theme of condemnation of urban society.

The answer to that question is given in the Apocalypse where the eventual state of divine-human communion is represented by a Heavenly City. Now, it is startling that Rev 21,12-17 depicts the wall surrounding the cube-shaped city with gigantic dimensions⁽¹¹⁾. Here again, therefore, is a point of comparison. The New Jerusalem is the divine answer to the misguided aspirations of the people of Babel.

One could point to a long-standing biblical tradition of identifying the city with a tower: Mic 4,8, for instance, compares Jerusalem to a tower, and Cant 4,4 equates the neck of the bride to the tower of David. On the one hand the City is guarded by a huge wall, signifying the safety of its inhabitants, on the other hand its gateways are open at all times, probably hinting at the absence of all evil at that stage. The imagery’s core meaning appears to be God’s total accessibility in a New Jerusalem, that is at the same time fortified and open for a day without evening.

Also here, collating the two towers, that of Babel and that of the Heavenly City, one perceives the antithesis between merely human craving for fleeting greatness, and the surpassing magnitude of God’s own work. The towering City really symbolizes His presence with His chosen people⁽¹²⁾: “You are my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy”, Ps 61,3.

4. From ἡ κεφαλὴ ἔσται ἕως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Gen 11,4) to καταβαίνουσιν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ (Rev 21,2)

After having compared the gigantic dimensions of the former and the new “tower”, we now focus on the fact that Babel’s top was meant to reach the

⁽¹⁰⁾ Incidentally, pride will be the besetting sin of Babylon at a later date.

⁽¹¹⁾ Cf. Isa 2,2; Mic 4,1; Ezek 11,24; 37,1.

⁽¹²⁾ Corresponding to His role in Rev 7,9-10; 14,4, the Lamb supplants the temple, insinuating that the cultic mediation between God and His people will have ceased. Likewise, the Temple of 11,19; 14,15.17; 15,5-6.8; 16,1.17 will have disappeared by the time the new reality appears.

heavens, רָאִשׁוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם. To touch the skies must have been the ultimate thrill for those people of Shinar, a reflection of their ambition to equal God, whose abode they aimed to invade. Humans hypothesize that they can enter into a divine-human competition or even rivalry.

Very different is the dynamic in John's Apocalypse, where the city is seen as descending from heaven⁽¹³⁾, from God⁽¹⁴⁾, καταβαίνουσιν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, Rev 21,2.10. It seems necessary to distinguish two aspects here: the motion as such, and its direction downwards. Movement is always a process and never the final stage. In biblical terms human life and history connote motion and unrest⁽¹⁵⁾, whereas eternity is tied up with the notion of stillness and repose⁽¹⁶⁾. Accordingly, since the movement leads from heaven to earth (21,2, ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ), it expresses an interim status of that City between eternity and history⁽¹⁷⁾. Similarity exists between the unusual descent of the City and a tent, which is a symbol not just of sojourn, pausing and rest, but also evoking nomadic migration. Hence, two basic periods of biblical civilization are evidenced: at the beginning there is the tent which in its ultimate development reaches the stage of urbanization. Tent and city, we would argue, symbolically embody human history as such⁽¹⁸⁾.

The verb καταβαίνειν occurs in relation to different angels (10,1; 18,1; 20,1) and divine chastisements (13,13; 16,21) that come down from above⁽¹⁹⁾. Noteworthy are the intertextual links with Gen 18,21 (God looks after men), Exod 19,10 (Moses brings law down from Sinai to his people), Matt 3,16 (Spirit comes on Jesus after His baptism), and most importantly, the "Son of man" passages in John's Gospel referring to the Incarnation (Jo 6,33.38.41.50.51.58)⁽²⁰⁾. Therefore, the *katábasis* signals the coming of God

⁽¹³⁾ "The preposition ἐκ [...] tells the origin of the Holy City and the ἀπὸ [...] points to the City's originator". R.L. THOMAS, *Revelation 8–22. An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago, IL 1995) 441.

⁽¹⁴⁾ This vision is so unexpected not least because it differs from Jewish expectations: "The city that John sees is thus part of the new creation, that is to say, it is a completely new phenomenon. It descends [...] from the newly created heavens. Such a novel idea, as far as one can ascertain from the texts available, was nowhere entertained by the Jews of the time" (R. MCKELVEY, *The New Temple. The Church in the New Testament* [Oxford 1969] 169).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf. Ps 23,4 and *passim*.

⁽¹⁶⁾ See especially Heb 4,1–13.

⁽¹⁷⁾ "The Jerusalem imagery in Rev 21–22 as an integrative symbol is 'already' in the sense that it has integrative efficacy for the present and it is also 'not yet' in the sense that it charts future possible courses for development as an ideal model. [...] There is thus movement in the imagery between center and circumference [...]. The descending city is seen as an integrative symbol drawing together the polarities of heaven and earth"; J. DU RAND, «The imagery of the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9–22,5)», *Neot* 22 (1988) 81.

⁽¹⁸⁾ This interpretation does not overrule the opinion that the sacred writer intimates an identification of the heavenly city with the Temple, cf. H. GIESEN, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (RNT; Regensburg 1997) 451.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Notice the difference from the city of Babylon that *falls* from the earth into the abyss, making room for the New Jerusalem, that descends from heaven to earth (11,13; 14,8; 18,2).

⁽²⁰⁾ "If [...] the participle *katabainousa* ('coming down') is John's distinctive articulation of the natural connection between earthly and heavenly expectations of Jerusalem, then this Christological motif could be an additional reason for his choice of words. Just as the full revelation is inaugurated by Christ's self-sacrifice, so the final manifestation (*katabaino* = 'descend' used at John 3,13; 6,33.38.41.42.50.51.58) is now applied to the realization of the hopes of a New Jerusalem (Rev 3,12; 21,2.10)". J.M. COURT, *Myth and History in the Book of Revelation* (London 1979) 158.

to encounter the human race, to unite Himself with man⁽²¹⁾. Remarkable is the colossal *inclusio* between Rev 3,12 and 21,2, effecting a relationship of promise and climactic fulfillment, of a final completion of all revelation.

Again, the comparison of Gen and Rev illustrates the axiomatic difference between the human endeavor to presumptuously trespass God's heavenly sphere in Babel and the descent from God of a New City that brings to fulfillment the Incarnational event of the Son of God⁽²²⁾.

5. *From ποιήσωμεν ἑαυτοῖς ὄνομα (Gen 11,4) to ὀνόματα ἐπιγεγραμμένα (Rev 21,12)*

Then we see the settlers of Shinar animate one another, saying: "Come, let us make a name for ourselves!" Is this not one more instance of human disobedience (cf. Gen 2–3; 4,1–9; 6,1–8), the refusal to accept one's place as a human in the universe under God, invoking and magnifying His name? Abraham will be told by God, in contrast, "I will make your name great", Gen 12,2; and a further reversal occurs when God makes David's name great, 2 Sam 7,9.29. The hint of blasphemy throughout the narrative, however, turns on the synonymy between the verb "to make" (ποιήσωμεν ἑαυτοῖς ὄνομα), used for building the tower and the term of divine creation.

For the sake of comparison let us again turn to the vision of the New Jerusalem, Rev 21,12–14: "It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites [...]. And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb". Therefore, those names are not given by man but by God⁽²³⁾. They represent His design of history and eternity⁽²⁴⁾; they are meant to honor those who have followed the Lamb wherever He went. Ultimately, those names redound to God's own glory.

Consequently, the prideful project of human beings desirous of self-exaltation and self-glorification was to be a failure, whereas the humility and self-forgetfulness of the followers of the Lamb is eternally rewarded by God.

⁽²¹⁾ There is an intertextual difference between the Hebrew tradition where people go to meet the final City, and Revelation where this City comes to meet people.

⁽²²⁾ "Jerusalem has become the meeting point between heaven and earth". W.J. DUMBRELL, *The End of the Beginning. Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Moore Theological College Lecture Series 1983; Grand Rapids, MI 1985) 31.

⁽²³⁾ See also the new name given to the victor, Rev 2,17.

⁽²⁴⁾ The fact that the names of the apostles are inscribed on the foundations and those of the sons of Israel on the gates, seems to indicate the seer's intention to signal the return of Israel into the salvation community on the basis of the faith of the apostles. Chronologically it would appear to be more coherent if the tribes of Israel were on the City foundations and the names of the apostles on the gates. Yet theologically, the apostles are the real foundation of the Church as the people of God, and only through them the Old Covenant people enter the City. To counterbalance this sequence, Israel is mentioned first. Hence, Old and New Testament are ingeniously joined. Hence, the historical and the descriptive order stand in inverse position.

6. *From συγχέωμεν διέσπειρεν (Gen 11,7.8) to περιπατήσουσιν τὰ ἔθνη (Rev 21,24)*

We finally arrive at the last point of comparison between the story of Babel and the New Jerusalem. Gen 11,7-8 describes the eventual cessation of all work due to an insurmountable language confusion: "Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city."

Gen 11,7, then, reverses the dynamic of 11,4: God descends to disperse the builders and the population, δεῦτε καὶ καταβάντες συγχέωμεν. There is a vestige here of the ancient Near Eastern literary motif of divine jealousy of humans, "there will be no preventing whatever they propose to do". There is also a trace of the divine assembly in the plural wording "Come (δεῦτε, cf. 11,3.4!), let Us go down", later on interpreted in the light of Christian revelation as referring the Trinity of Persons in one God.

Regarding the name of the city, Babel⁽²⁵⁾, the puns seem to be the crux, and untranslatable: the Hebrew root *balal*, Gen 11,7, signifies "to mix", "to confound", "to disperse". Another reading is *nebelah*, meaning "destruction". The root *nbl* also gives us the word for "fool". So when the people, who had been dignified with homogeneity of language, used the privilege given them for evil purposes, God put a stop to the impulse of their wickedness through creating differences in language⁽²⁶⁾.

The word *dabar* appears for the first time in Genesis 11,1, which led midrashic commentators to suppose that the initial ten chapters of Genesis transpire in some pre-discursive context. Speech goes unrecorded as in the monologues of Adam and Eve. We are also not told what Cain said to Abel; Noah has no dialogue with God. *dabar*, in its full speech-sense, evolves around and is aborted at Babel⁽²⁷⁾. Henceforth mankind chatters in a host of closed, mutually incomprehensible tongues⁽²⁸⁾.

Yahweh's confusing of their speech is a punishment for their pride; it is also a guarding against any future massed assaults on divine sovereignty. The act resembles the expulsion of the protoparents from further contact with the tree of life, lest they eat of that tree, too, Gen 3,22-23. God's will that the race go forth to possess their lands is now carried out with added vehemence because of human resistance; God scatters them because they will not freely spread abroad⁽²⁹⁾. Unlike Adam/Eve, Cain/Abel and Noah/Flood, there seems

⁽²⁵⁾ The name Babel is understood to mean "confusion" but more probably means "Gate of God": this is the Mesopotamian setting from which the people of Israel will spring, through Abraham.

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis*.

⁽²⁷⁾ "The fact that the Divine and the humans do not stand in dialogue with one another constitutes one of the most ominous elements in this text", L. KECK et al. (eds.), *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN 1994) I, 411.

⁽²⁸⁾ Cf. G. STEINER, *No Passion Spent. Essays 1978-1996* (New Haven 1996).

⁽²⁹⁾ Rabbinical scholars have compared the Babylonian exile to the thwarting of the plan of Babel's builders.

to be no direct message of grace in this final story of the Primeval History (Gen 1–11)⁽³⁰⁾.

Quite different, and even antithetical is the picture of the Heavenly City, Rev 21,24,26, where peoples are united as they walk in the light of the Lamb, and bring their riches, glory and honor into it (see also Rev 7,9). Kings introduce not just their own wealth into the City, but also the riches and honor of the nations they represent. It is not just material resources that will be contributed to the City's splendor, but also peoples' reverence (τιμή). Unlike Isa 60,6–9, John supplies no catalogue of merchandises; instead, the δόξη, Rev 21,24, is being brought into the City.

These phrases breathe an atmosphere of unity and harmony in the presence of God⁽³¹⁾. Eloquent is the reiteration of the deictic εἰς (vv.24b,26,27a), insinuating motion: the City is gradually embellished by both divine and human values. While peoples will walk through the divine light (διδά, v.24a), God's and the Lamb's presence is depicted with static prepositions (ἐν, 22,3b; ἐπὶ, 22,5c): a merging of the concepts of πόλις and θεός, in whose presence kings and peoples dwell unendingly⁽³²⁾.

A previously dualistic world is undone by the restoration of the paradisiacal peace: in the last vision of the Apocalypse, creation becomes a sure refuge of salvation for the victors, where Creator and creatures are happily united, and from which all malicious powers are ostracized. This cosmic side is enriched by the idea of unity, protection and communitarian life characteristic of a city. Added is the element of sacredness, divine predilection and ownership, as well as continuity in salvation economy, deriving from the historical notion of Jerusalem⁽³³⁾. All these aspects are refined by the image of motion that expresses something of an interim status of that divine-human communion, participative of both history and eternity. The descent signifies mainly God's stooping toward humanity, to unite Himself with humankind, in order to draw them to Himself. It also announces the definitive covenant between God and humankind in exclusive love, permanent commitment, and

⁽³⁰⁾ Although one could argue that the ensuing Ancestral History, Gen 11,27–50,26 is a story of grace.

⁽³¹⁾ "The entire presentation stretches the limits of human vocabulary and thought to emphasize the glorious reality of God dwelling among his people" (R.H. MOUNCE, *The Book of Revelation* [NICNT; Grand Rapids – Cambridge 1998] 380–381).

⁽³²⁾ "La città-tempio ha quella doppia funzione di irradiazione e di attrazione che esercitava il tempio della Gerusalemme terrena: in uno schema letterario che riprende da vicino quello dei salmi gradualisti, l'autore ci mostra questo doppio movimento, alla luce del quale cerca di interpretare quella che sarà l'attività escatologica (21,24–27)" (U. VANNI, *L'Apocalisse*. Ermeneutica, Egesi, Teologia [Bologna 1991] 384).

⁽³³⁾ C. Deutsch highlights the historical background of the City image: "In describing Jerusalem as bride and wife, John has taken up a biblical symbol which originally referred to the restoration of the historical Jerusalem following its destruction in 587 B.C. That symbol had already been transformed in post-biblical Judaism to describe the new reality, which God would create in the time beyond history. Placing the vision as he does, after the description of the final destruction in 19:11–20:15, John indicates that he too understands this new reality to occur after the final time. He, however, calls his apocalyptic city the bride/wife not only of God but also of the Lamb". "Transformation of Symbols: The New Jerusalem in Rv 21,1–22,5", *ZNW* 78 (1987) 125.

durable unity⁽³⁴⁾. In one word, the heavenly City is an image for the nuptial communion between God and Lamb on the one hand, and humanity on the other.

Thus, the contrastive reversal between the dispersation of the population of Babel and the unification of all peoples in the New Jerusalem could not be more explicit and complete.

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Looking back over the above essay, we come to the conclusion that the actors in the story of the city/tower of Babel, God and humanity, are working to opposite purposes, and the name, i.e., reputation, they expect to achieve is entirely different from the name they do achieve, Babel, i.e. Confusion. What humanity does, God undoes. However, the image of the Heavenly City remedies the confusion by highlighting the eschatological coming of God to repatriate humanity.

Therefore, the profiling of this City, we would argue, is more than a creative reinterpretation of the Ezekelian temple (Ezek 48,30-35), or of the Trito-Isaian "vision" of chapters 60–62 (see also Isa 1,8; Jer 4,31; 4 Ezra 9,38-39, where the bride was seen as a prototype of the existing salvation community), or even of the anti-image of Babylon (Rev 17). At the close of our reflections it becomes clear that the New Jerusalem is the inversion of Babel: we might call it an inverse-archetypal relationship. A literary antithesis is accomplished between the city/tower of Babel and the New Jerusalem. In the latter the profuse apocalyptic imagery flows into one ultimate image, that of theanthropic oneness⁽³⁵⁾. The protological event of Babel finds its fulfilment in the eschatological City.

Unification is achieved only by and in Christ who sends out His Spirit to unite peoples and languages on Pentecost (cf. Acts 2,5-12; Rev 7,9-10). Language used to promote a human agenda turns into language used to announce the "mighty works of God", Acts 2,11. From Babel peoples are scattered in judgment; from Jerusalem they scatter to spread the good news, which would eventuate in worldwide unity. But we now have to add a further moment of unification: that of the Holy City. Thus, a thread runs through history from Babel (Gen 11) to the pentecostal Jerusalem (Acts 2), and from the fallen Babylon (Rev 17) to the eschatological Jerusalem (Rev 21).

A closing thought: In an age of globalization, humanity is invited and urged by the stories of Babel and the Heavenly City to consider using the things that we have in common to glorify God rather than to make a name for ourselves! Human beings still fail to follow God's command to fill the earth. Rather, they try to come together, challenge their earthly finitude, and approach God's own dwelling. So after all this time humanity has not

⁽³⁴⁾ Cf. G.P. HUGENBERGER, *Marriage as Covenant. A Study of Biblical Law and Ethics Governing Marriage Developed from the Perspective of Malachi* (VTSup 52; Leiden – New York – Köln 1994).

⁽³⁵⁾ This dynamic passing from many symbols towards a single one, i.e., the Covenant, is underscored also by G. Borgonovo (*La notte e il suo sole. Luce e tenebre nel Libro di Giobbe. Analisi simbolica* [Roma 1995] 45).

advanced significantly over the time of Babel. Still the humans disobey. But God is still Savior and comes down to save humanity from itself⁽³⁶⁾: “No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man” (Joh 3,13).

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SUMMARY

There are some salient points of contact between the narrative of Babel, Gen 11:1-9, and the vision of the New Jerusalem, Rev 21:1–22:5. These parallels are starkly contrastive. Among the most stunning parallels are the way man’s initiative is underscored in Gen, while God’s initiative is emphasized in Rev. Human accomplishment appears to be at the heart of the narrative in Igenesis, whereas God’s accomplishment is presented in Rev. Moreover, worldly reputation is set in opposition to heavenly fame, as well as a worldwide dispersion in Gen as it is being contrasted with a worldwide unification in Rev. The essay’s conclusion is that the protological text is brought to fulfillment in the eschatological one in an inverse archetypal sense.

⁽³⁶⁾ Cf. D. COTTER, *Genesis* (Berit Olam, Collegeville, PA 2003) 70.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Benjamin ZIEMER, *Abram – Abraham. Kompositionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Genesis 14, 15 und 17* (BZAW 350). Berlin – New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2005. xiv–449 p. 16 × 23,5.

Die Abrahamgeschichte im Buch Genesis gehört zu den meistgelesenen Erzählabschnitten des Alten Testaments. Der hohe Bekanntheitsgrad erleichtert jedoch die exegetische Arbeit nicht. Vielmehr erschweren geprägte Deutungsmuster seitens der Leserinnen/Leser und der Exegetinnen/Exegeten die Vermittlung neuer Auslegungsansätze. Zudem erweist sich die Disparatheit der Erzählstoffe wenig förderlich für die Anwendung einheitlicher Deutekategorien. Monographische Darstellungen lösen die Probleme entweder so, dass Teilaspekte der Abrahamgeschichte im Rahmen übergreifender Fragestellungen erörtert werden, oder in der Weise, dass Abschnitte, die mehrere Kapitel umfassen, eingehender untersucht werden. Daneben sind monographische Abhandlungen zu einzelnen Kapiteln zu finden. Die hier zu besprechende Arbeit von B. Ziemer, die als Dissertation an der Theologischen Fakultät der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg entstand, wählt einen Mittelweg. Sie untersucht drei ausgewählte Kapitel der Abrahamgeschichte (Gen 14, Gen 15 und Gen 17), die weder von der Thematik noch vom Erzählgefälle her eine Einheit bilden. Insofern hängt das Gelingen des Unternehmens nicht zuletzt an der Formulierung einer Fragestellung, die einen gemeinsamen Aspekt zur Untersuchung der drei Kapitel aufweist. Einleitend (3-7) umschreibt Ziemer daher eine kompositionsgeschichtliche Fragestellung in Anlehnung an die Arbeiten von E. Blum (*Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* [WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984]; *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* [BZAW 189; Berlin – New York 1990]). Ziemer will zeigen, dass die von Gen 17 geprägte Kompositionsschicht identisch ist mit der endredaktionellen Bearbeitung des Buches Genesis, während die beiden anderen untersuchten Kapitel den Verfassern von Gen 17 bereits vorlagen. Die durch Gen 17 geprägte Bearbeitungsschicht bezeichnet er als „Gen-17-Schicht“ oder als „Endkompositionsschicht der Genesis“. Insofern setzt er sich von der gängigen Forschungsmeinung ab, die Gen 17 als „priesterlichen“ Text bzw. als zentrales Kapitel einer ursprünglich selbständigen „Priesterschrift“ versteht. Bei der Durchführung der Untersuchungen zeigt sich jedoch, dass die solchermaßen formulierte kompositionsgeschichtliche Fragestellung eher randständig behandelt wird. Weitaus größeres Gewicht legt Ziemer auf die in sich schlüssige Auslegung der einzelnen Kapitel. In dieser Hinsicht liest sich

die Arbeit streckenweise wie die Sammlung dreier kürzerer Monographien, die durch eine der aktuellen Forschungslandschaft adäquate Thematik zusammengebunden wurden. Diese Einschätzung mindert nicht den Wert der Detailanalysen. Dabei zeigt sich, dass Ziener häufig Auslegungswege wählt, die in der Tradition rabbinisch-jüdischer Exegese stehen, etwa die Ausführungen zur Zahlen- und Buchstabensymbolik. Hier wird eine Auslegungstradition gepflegt, die mitunter in der historisch-kritischen Schriftexegese etwas zu kurz kommt.

Der erste Hauptteil (11-162) ist der Besprechung von Gen 14 gewidmet. Er wird eingeleitet von einem detaillierten Vergleich des masoretischen Textes mit den zu Gen 14 erhaltenen Abschnitten im Genesis-Apokryphon (1QGenAp). Aus dem Vergleich erhebt Ziener einen "Grundtext" bzw. eine "Grundschicht" von Gen 14, die den Erzählbestand umfasst, der beiden Textzeugen gemeinsam ist. Die jeweiligen Varianten hält er für redaktionell bedingte sekundäre Hinzufügungen. Der "Grundtext" soll als eine selbständige, novellenartige Überlieferung neben einer bereits umfangreichen Abrahamgeschichte bestanden haben, die Gen 12, 13, 15, 18 und 19 umfasste. Noch vor der durch Gen 17 geprägten endredaktionellen Bearbeitung sei dann die Gen 14 zugrunde liegende Erzählung in die Abrahamgeschichte eingearbeitet worden. Der Anlass für die Einarbeitung sei die Füllung von "Leerstellen" in Gen 15 und die nähere Begründung der Gottesrede in Gen 15,1 gewesen. Den "Grundtext" von Gen 14 versteht Ziener als eine "Ätiologie" der Landnahme im Ostjordanland. Durch den Feldzug Kedorlaomers wird das gesamte Ostjordanland zur *tabula rasa* (110) und somit frei für die Landnahme der Nachkommen Lots (Moab und Ammon) und Esaus (Edom). Dagegen bleibt das Westjordanland, wo sich Abraham und Melchisedek befinden, vom Krieg verschont. Die Hervorhebung Melchisedeks als des gerechten "Königs der Vollkommenheit" zeige die wichtige Stellung Jerusalems und die "judäisch-israelitische Perspektive" der "Grundschicht" von Gen 14. Erst die v. a. in geographischen Erläuterungen greifbaren Glossierungen — etwa die Einfügungen von Mamre, Eschkol und Kadesch in den Versen 7, 13 und 24 — verlegen den Schauplatz der Ereignisse weiter in das südliche Westjordanland und bereiten dadurch Erzählungen wie Ex 17 und Num 14 vor. Als Datierung des "Grundtextes" schlägt Ziener das 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. vor, weil die Figur des Kedorlaomer die Abhängigkeit Judas von den im elamitischen Susa regierenden persischen Großkönigen reflektiere.

Der durch die Untersuchungen zu Gen 14 vermittelte Erkenntniszuwachs beruht einmal auf dem bislang noch nicht in entsprechender Weise durchgeführten Vergleich zwischen der Version des masoretischen Textes und derjenigen von 1QGenAp. Zum anderen vermögen die Detailuntersuchungen zur Zahlensymbolik zu überzeugen. So verweist Ziener mehrfach darauf, dass die besondere Stellung Melchisedeks auch darauf beruht, dass er der zehnte König ist, der in der Genesis genannt wird. Nachfragen ergeben sich hinsichtlich der überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Ausführungen. So erscheint nicht ganz einsichtig, weshalb die von Ziener postulierten Glossen im Text von Gen 14 Anzeichen redaktioneller Bearbeitung sein sollen. Auch der Sinn einer ehemals selbständigen novellenartigen Erzählung des Kriegszugs Kedorlaomers und seiner Verbündeten ist mit der Kennzeichnung

als "Ätiologie" der Landnahme des Ostjordanlands nicht zureichend beschrieben, zumal Ziemer selbst im Text moab- und ammonfeindliche Tendenzen entdeckt. Ob die Datierung in das 5. Jahrhundert kritischer Nachfrage standhält, bleibt abzuwarten. Zumindest deckt sich die von Ziemer herausgearbeitete "judäisch-israelitische Perspektive" nicht mit den zeitgeschichtlichen Gegebenheiten, die von zunehmenden Spannungen zwischen Juda-Jerusalem und Samaria geprägt waren, wie sie noch in den Büchern Esra und Nehemia erkennbar sind. Letztlich verweist Ziemer selbst darauf, dass Gen 14 von der Zusammenstellung unterschiedlicher Erzählmotive und einem Netz intratextueller Bezüge geprägt ist. Dazuhin war die Erzählung im Alten Testament nicht mehr traditionsbildend, im Gegensatz etwa zur Rezeption im Neuen Testament (Hebr 7). Diese Beobachtungen sprechen zumindest nicht für die Annahme, Gen 14 sei noch vor der durch Gen 17 geprägten Bearbeitungsschicht in die Abrahamgeschichte eingefügt worden.

Der zweite Hauptteil (165-274) gilt Gen 15. Das bereits in der Behandlung von Gen 14 angewandte, auf die Zahlensymbolik bezogene Auslegungsverfahren wird dabei breiter entfaltet. Nach der Analyse Ziemers ist das Schema mit den Zahlen drei und vier "durchgehendes Strukturprinzip" (234) des Textes. Es ist zum einen in der Zahl der Tiere fassbar, wenn lediglich die drei dreijährigen Tiere geteilt werden, das vierte Tier jedoch unversehrt bleibt. Daneben ist das Zahlenschema auch in der Völkerliste (Gen 15,19-20) zu erkennen. Hier verweisen die ersten drei Namen, die jeweils mit dem Buchstaben *qôp* beginnen (Gen 15,19), auf eine "uneigentliche" Erfüllung der Landzusage, da die von ihnen repräsentierten Landschaften nicht zu dem von Josua eingenommenen "Land Kanaan" gehören. Dieses wird erst durch die in Gen 15,20 erwähnten Völkernamen umschrieben. Das "drei-vier"- bzw. 3+1-Schema steht für vier Generationen oder Zeitalter. Das erste Zeitalter ist dasjenige Abrahams bzw. der Erzeltern, die weiteren sind der Ägyptenaufenthalt, der Auszug aus Ägypten und die Landnahme. Die ersten drei Zeitalter sind – analog zur Teilung der ersten drei Tiere – von der Gefährdung der Landzusage geprägt. Erst das vierte Zeitalter, die Landnahme, bringt die Einlösung der Zusage. In diesem Deutungshorizont weist Gen 15 weit über die Erzelterngeschichte der Genesis hinaus. Ziemer kann somit als "Kernanliegen" des Textes "die chronologisch und theologisch ordnende Verbindung der zwei Ursprungstraditionen Israels" (Erzeltern und Exodus) (236) beschreiben.

Wie im Falle von Gen 14 betreffen die Nachfragen die relative und absolute chronologische Einordnung von Gen 15. In der umstrittenen Frage des relativen Verhältnisses von Gen 15 zu Gen 17 verteidigt Ziemer die literargeschichtliche Priorität von Gen 15. Allerdings fällt die kritische Diskussion mit den anders lautenden Positionen von T. Römer ("*Genèse 15 et les tensions dans la communauté juive postexilique dans le cycle d'Abraham*", *Transeuphratène* 7 [1994] 107-121) und K. Schmid (*Erzväter und Exodus* [WMANT 72; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1999]) eher knapp aus. Die stofflichen Bezüge von Gen 15 zum Danielbuch erklärt Ziemer ebenso für nicht datierungsrelevant (244) wie die Beobachtung, dass nicht Gen 17, sondern Gen 15 im Jubiläenbuch (ca. 2. Jahrhundert v. Chr.) breit rezipiert wird (379-382). Insofern erscheint die Datierung von Gen 15 in das späte 6.

Jahrhundert v. Chr. von der Prämisse geleitet zu sein, das Kapitel zeitlich noch vor Gen 14 (erste Hälfte 5. Jahrhundert) und Gen 17 (Ende 5. Jahrhundert) zu plazieren.

Der dritte Hauptteil des Buches (275-384) beschäftigt sich mit Gen 17. Durchaus prägnant begründet Ziemer, warum er von der These einer selbständigen "Priesterschrift" oder einer "Priestergrundschrift" (P^e) Abstand nimmt. Er verweist darauf, dass die Priestergesetze der Sinaiperikope und das Deuteronomium ohne die Abrahamfigur auskommen. Sowohl priesterliche als auch deuteronomistische Theologie sind daher "Exodus-zentriert" (283). Die inhaltliche und sprachliche Bezogenheit der herkömmlicherweise P^e zugerechneten Texte erkläre sich vielmehr aus der "Annahme, dass sie generell selbst in die Nähe der Endredaktion des Pentateuch gehören" (289). In diesem Zusammenhang entfalte Gen 17 die Stellung Abrahams, Saras, Ismaels und Isaaks innerhalb der Erzelterngeschichte. Die weiteren Ausführungen zu Gen 17 gelten dem Aufweis, inwiefern das Kapitel die genealogische und chronologische Struktur der Genesis bestimmt. Auch an diesem Punkt wäre dann nachzufragen, warum ein Kapitel, dessen strukturierende Wirkung weitgehend auf das Buch Genesis beschränkt bleibt, der Endredaktion des Pentateuch angehören soll, währenddem Gen 15 mit den weit über die Genesis hinaus reichenden Verweisen literargeschichtlich vorgeordnet wird. Die Endredaktion hätte dann, zumindest in der Abrahamgeschichte, einen weniger weiten literarischen Horizont als die ihr vorliegende Erzählüberlieferung. An diesem Punkt ist die Diskussion noch lange nicht abgeschlossen und die vorliegende Untersuchung leistet notgedrungen nicht mehr als eine vorläufige Zwischenbilanz.

Eine thesenartige Zusammenfassung, die auch in englischer Übersetzung geboten wird (387-394), ein Literaturverzeichnis und Register schließen das sorgfältig gearbeitete und gut lesbare Buch ab.

In den Fragen der Überlieferungs- bzw. Kompositionsgeschichte kommt das hier angezeigte Werk über die bekannten Positionen nicht hinaus. Die These, dass Gen 17 und verwandte Texte zu einer redaktionellen Überarbeitungs- oder Kompositionsschicht gehören, ist begründet und nicht von der Hand zu weisen, allerdings nicht neu und bekanntlich nicht die einzige Möglichkeit, die Überlieferungsgeschichte der disparaten Stoffe in der Erzelterngeschichte nachzuzeichnen. Eine konstruktive Belebung der Diskussion um die Pentateuchentstehung ist somit von Ziemers Arbeit kaum zu erwarten, zumal die unterbreiteten Argumente selten neue Aspekte bieten. In dieser Hinsicht indiziert die Studie allerdings lediglich die Schwierigkeit, ein für Forschung und Lehre konsensfähiges Modell der Pentateuchentstehung zu erstellen. Die Überzeugungskraft der Arbeit Ziemers liegt in den Detailbeobachtungen zum Text und in den daraus resultierenden Auslegungen der einzelnen Kapitel. Hier findet sich eine Fülle weiterführender, bislang noch nicht oder nur selten herausgearbeiteter Einsichten. Das Werk zeigt sich in diesen Abschnitten als schriftgelehrte Arbeit, die von allen denjenigen, die sich mit den einschlägigen Texten beschäftigen, mit Gewinn rezipiert werden wird.

Michael L. BARRÉ, *The Lord Has Saved Me. A Study of the Psalm of Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:9-20) (CBQMS 39)*. Washington, The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2005. x-294 p. 15 × 23. \$12

Barré's claim (1) that his book of 294 pages is the first major treatment of the Psalm of Hezekiah (PsHez) since Begrich's 68-page monograph published in 1926 (\pm 80 years ago) deserves applause, since this thorough monograph is a welcome contribution not only to Isaianic research but also to the fields of Old Testament poetics and textual restoration. Although a number of other contributions of lesser extent have seen the light in the meantime, the author's motivation for this 'groundwork' for future research on PsHez (5) is based on deficiencies in Begrich's approach and the fact that his monograph was published "just over twenty years before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls" (2). In addition, Barré introduces new arguments for the classification of PsHez as a thanksgiving psalm, a more sound approach to Hebrew metrics, and a reconsideration of the criteria for determining what features classify a given passage as Standard or Late Biblical Hebrew (especially the issue of Aramaisms).

The focus (4-5) of this monograph is a) to establish the earliest recoverable text of PsHez; b) to look at PsHez as a work of poetry; c) to deal with the issues of literary genre, date of composition, and authorship; d) to discuss PsHez's setting within the context of Isaiah 36-38. Especially on the second issue, the importance of this psalm as a work of poetry, which has been a neglected area of research in the past, a major contribution is being made. This is the reason why Barré spends so much time and effort on the structure and poetic devices in the text of PsHez. The author takes the relationship between the structure and the meaning of the text as the basis for a proper understanding of the poem (24-34). In his detailed colometric analysis, which forms part of the determination of the structure, he takes word-count very seriously (12-13, 29, 132-133, 204). In addition, the method of comparative philology of cognate languages is applied in combination with a sensitivity to the context and structure of the text of PsHez (7-9).

He acknowledges the existence and importance of other approaches of exegesis but, because of the extent of this monograph, he only treats the above-mentioned aspects (5). One can understand the motivation for the delimitation of his own approach. However, his claim (4) that he confines himself to "textual criticism, rhetorical criticism, and other methods to arrive at the clearest understanding of PsHez that is possible given our current understanding of Biblical Hebrew poetry at the beginning of the twenty-first century", exalts his approach above others and excludes to a large extent the fact that approaches such as reader's response criticism, ideology criticism, body criticism, etc. have introduced important further insights to the understanding of biblical texts. Contemporary research, therefore, needs to move beyond historically centred and text-centred approaches (such as are to be found in this monograph) to a more inclusive hermeneutics where the role of the reader is also taken seriously in order to obtain a fuller understanding of biblical texts.

As can be expected from someone who rightly rejects the infallibility of the Masoretic Text (MT) as well as its superiority to all other text types, the author sets the scene for numerous textual emendations, most of which he argues in detail. He makes it clear, however, that “one should steer a prudent course between the Scylla of reckless emendation and the Charybdis of treating the MT as if it were infallible” (9). The four aspects he considers as crucial for textual emendation are a) the least amount of change to the consonantal text should be proposed; b) the emendation should make sense in terms of ancient Hebrew grammar and lexicography; c) the emendation should respect the passage as poetry in all its aspects; d) the context should be considered. Contrary to his first point, a rough count of approximately fifty-six emendations within a range of 12 verses of Hebrew text might raise the eyebrows of more conservative students of the text. Some of the emendations seem to be forced (e.g. v. 16ab discussed on pages 153-163, which he sees as the most difficult line in PsHez) and even driven by the underlying urge for word-count (154). The changing of the word-order of verse 12c, discussed on pages 106-107, serves as an example of forced transposition based on grammatical arguments and the LXX. I would be inclined to leave more room for the ‘poetic freedom’ of the poet than to alter his/her text on such strict grounds. Nevertheless, he presents the readers of his book with detailed explanations on all his textual emendations. These arguments are normally based on expected Hebrew readings, structural reasons, grammar, contents, and extra-textual examples (biblical and extra-biblical).

The author divides the text of PsHez into the superscription (v. 9), two main parts (vv. 10-14; 15-19), and the coda (v. 20). The superscription (v. 9), the secondary divisions of the poem itself (vv. 10-11; 12-14; 15-17; 18-19), and the coda (v. 20) are each treated as separate discussion units or chapters. This boils down to six chapters (chapters 2-7) of intensive wrestling with the text of PsHez. Each discussion unit (chapter) is introduced by a transliteration of the Masoretic text including the disjunctive accents (indicated by superscript letters) at the end of each segment. The detailed textual remarks, which form the main body of each discussion unit, are always introduced first by the readings of the specific section in nine ancient witnesses, viz. 1Qisa^a, 1QIsa^b, the LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Vg, the Syriac, and the Targum of Isaiah. An emended text and translation conclude the textual remarks of each discussion unit before some rhetorical observations (except in the case of the superscription) regarding the specific unit are made. Each chapter concludes with general comments on the contents of the specific unit of the psalm. Form, date, and authorship are discussed in chapter 8 and receive much less attention than the detailed text-centered discussion of the previous chapters. In chapter 9, incorrectly indicated as (yet another) chapter 8 in the text but correctly numbered in the table of contents, the PsHez is discussed within its context of Isaiah 36-38 and the parallel text of 2 Kings 18,13-20,19. After the summary (chapter 10), an appendix furnishes the final emended text, a technical translation, and a simplified translation of the PsHez. An extended bibliography of eighteen pages, an index of Scripture passages, and an index of authors round the book off to 294 pages.

As a highly recommended book the style of writing is logical and very technical with the informed reader in mind. It is not easy to appreciate the

argumentation without the Hebrew text in sight. The use of the Hebrew script instead of the transliteration of the Hebrew would have made it easier to follow. I would categorize the principal readers of the book as serious researchers in Isaianic literature and Hebrew poetics, and not as undergraduate students and pastors, although each chapter concludes with useful general comments in which the interpretation of the various sections within the context of the psalm as a whole receives more attention.

A number of too obvious errors in the manuscript catch the eye. We list only some of them: p. 2 (repetition of "the test of time"), p. 12 ("are" instead of "is"), p. 24 ("divined" instead of "derived"), p. 32 (v. 16d instead v. 17b), p. 39 (repetition of "that"), p. 46 (incorrect use of "when" after while), p. 222 (repetition of "of"), p. 227 ("that" instead of "than" and wrong quotations of Judges 5 and Jonah 2), p. 231 (the number of the chapter is incorrect and should read "CHAPTER 9"), p. 238 (repetition of "that").

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Christiane DE VOS, *Klage als Gotteslob aus der Tiefe*. Der Mensch vor Gott in den individuellen Klagepsalmen (FAT, II.11), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005. x-261p. 15,5 × 23. € 49,00

"Wie steht der Mensch vor Gott in den individuellen Klagepsalmen?" (1) Das ist die Leitfrage dieser Groninger, von Ed Noort und Hermann Spieckermann betreuten Dissertation des Jahres 2004. Die Verfasserin ist deutlich praktisch-theologisch und wissenschaftlich motiviert, wenn sie an die komplexe Problematik, an der sich schon Generationen von Exegetinnen und Exegeten versucht haben, herangeht. Schon die Quellenlage ist unübersichtlich. Soll die Forscherin von Gunkelschen Gattungen ausgehen? (4-5). Ein gemeinsamer Sitz im Leben und eine einheitliche literarische Struktur sind in den 39 vorkommenden individuellen Notgebeten (8) aber nicht auszumachen (5-7; kritische Rückfrage: Könnte man heute analog von einer "einheitlichen" Situation der Arzt-Konsultation mit ritualisiertem Gespräch und ritualisierter Behandlung sprechen oder nicht? Mir scheint: Eine vergleichenden Untersuchung zum alttestamentlichen "Klagelied" und der "Patienten-beschwerde" heute wäre dringend notwendig). Der Gattungsbegriff ist Christiane de Vos zu eng; sie möchte lockerer von "Textgruppe" oder "Textsorte" (5) reden, für die einige, wenige Elemente "konstitutiv" sind, wie z.B. die "Klage" (7; hinzu kommen noch: Anrufung; Notschilderung; Vertrauensäußerung; Bitte; Lob; 7; insgesamt eine gute Umschreibung der Gunkelschen Bestimmungen!).

Die Verfasserin wählt zunächst drei von den relevanten 39 Psalmen aus und unterzieht sie einer genaueren Untersuchung hinsichtlich ihres

Menschen- und Gottesbildes. In Psalm 56 gewinnt das Vertrauensmotiv zunehmend an Bedeutung, so dass es schließlich die Feindkonfrontation übertönt (18-20). Der sich zuwendende Gott, bei dem der bedrohte Mensch sich bergen kann, steht am Ende unangefochten, souverän da (19). Ganz anders Psalm 88 (21-38): Während der klagende Mensch "immer mehr in die Tiefe der drohenden Sprachlosigkeit gezogen" wird (34), bleibt die Hilfe Gottes, des alleinigen Not-Verursachers, in der Schwebe (36-38) und seine Autorität im Zweifel. Wieder anders die Konstellation in Psalm 38 (39-56): Das Gebet mändert zwischen verschiedenen Lebensgefährdungen und Stimmungen, Gott erscheint als der "zornige und doch vertraute" (55), die menschlichen Feinde haben nur sekundäre Bedeutung.

Chr. de Vos hat sich also eine Arbeitsgrundlage geschaffen — Mensch und Gott nehmen in den Klagepsalmen durchaus unterschiedliche Positionen ein — und untersucht nun im umfangreicheren, sorgfältig recherchierten zweiten Teil "Der Mensch vor Gott" (58-222) thematisch fortschreitend das ganze Korpus der individuellen Klagegebete. Die Kapitelüberschriften verraten den traditionellen Dreiklang der neueren Psalmenexegese: Beter — Feinde — Gott. Dem ersten Aktanten ist das umfangreiche 5. Kapitel gewidmet: "Ich — Aussagen" (58-107). Die bloße Existenz, die mannigfachen Gefährdungen des Lebens, und die Hinwendung zu Gott in verschiedenen Akten des verzweiferten Schreiens, der hoffnungsvollen Bitte und sehnlichen Erwartung bilden den Kern der individuellen Klagegebete. Es ist kaum verwunderlich, dass die Notschilderung (85-101) oft besonders intensiv und drastisch ausfällt. Denn "Klagen" ist "das Einzige, was der Beter zu tun imstande ist" (106), alles hängt von Gottes neuer Zuwendung zum Notleidenden ab (105-107). In der "Klage über andere" (Kap. 6: 108-128) versucht die Verfasserin, Identität und Tun der "Feinde" zu klären. Für sie kommen vorwiegend übelgesinnte Menschen als Widerpart des Beters in Frage, ein Phänomen, das wir in den Straftatbeständen *mobbing* und *stalking* recht gut kennen. Dämonische Konnotationen scheiden nach ihrer Meinung weitgehend aus, weil der offizielle Glaube keine Dämonen zulässt (123-124). Dagegen ließen sich allerlei Argumente anführen; die Spuren magischer Praktiken und Anschauungen sind besonders im Psalter nicht zu übersehen (vgl. nur Ps 55; 59; 91) und die Untersuchungen von S. Mowinckel u.a. (de Vos zitiert nur H. Vorländer) zur Sache lassen sich nicht völlig wegwischen. Richtig ist sicher, dass in den Klageliedern des einzelnen die Feinde, Gegner, untreuen Freunde in unterschiedlicher Qualität und Position vorkommen. Manchmal verursachen sie die Not primär, an anderen Stellen reiten sie auf der "Unglückselle" und vertiefen durch ihre Håme das Leiden des Beters. Ob man den weiteren Schluss ziehen soll: "Der Kern der Klage über Dritte ist der, dass diese dem Beter sein bedrohtes Gottesverhältnis vor Augen führen" (125), bleibt indessen zweifelhaft (vgl. auch 169-181). Mir scheint, die Autorin überzieht ihr theologisches Prinzip ("alles hängt allein von Gott ab") und verdrängt ein wenig die existentielle Wucht der Feind- (und: Dämonen-)klage.

Von Gott handeln dementsprechend vier Kapitel und nicht nur ein einziges: Kap. 7 ("Wie der Beter Gott negativ erlebt", 129-144); Kap. 8 ("Was der Beter von Gott erwartet", 145-194); Kap. 9 ("Wie der Beter Gott anredet", 195-209); Kap. 10 ("Wie der Beter Gott positiv erlebt", 210-222). Der Gesamtumfang dieser im engen Sinn "theologischen" Untersuchung beträgt 94

Seiten gegenüber 50 für den ersten und 21 für den zweiten Studienblock. Hier schlägt das Herz der Verfasserin, hier findet sich eine Fülle von faszinierenden Detailbeobachtungen, die sich meistens auf präzise Wortstudien stützen. Der Beter, bzw. das Gebetsformular, formuliert scharf die unerträgliche Trennung von Gott, das Vergessen-, Verlassen- und Verlorensein, welches in der Regel nicht auf eigene Verfehlung oder Schuld zurückgeht (133). Psalm 51 ist in dieser Hinsicht eine Ausnahme (vgl. 67-69), nicht die besonders in protestantischer Rechtgläubigkeit angenommene Regel. Die Klagenden gehen noch weiter: Sie schildern Gott als einen, der dem Leid tatenlos zusieht oder es gar selbst herbeiführt: "Gott geht mit vernichtender Gewalt gegen den Beter vor, versetzt ihn in soziale Isolation oder tötet ihn" (143). Die Klage hat Hiobsche Dimensionen. Gibt es eine Erklärung für diese "Aggression Gottes" (143)? Das eigene Fehlverhalten kommt gelegentlich ins Spiel, reicht aber nicht aus (143-144). Die Verfasserin kommt an eine Stelle theologischer Reflexion, an der es nicht weiter geht und nur die beharrliche Bitte bleibt (vgl. Luthers Kampf mit dem "verborgenen Gott"). Der Beter erwartet natürlich Gottes Zuwendung und Hilfe; das stellt die Verfasserin an feinfühligsten Wortuntersuchungen dar (145-169). Aus der Not kann Gott aber nur helfen, wenn er gegebenenfalls die möglichen Verursacher, also die persönlichen Feinde, beseitigt oder neutralisiert (169-183). "Der Wunsch des Betroffenen nach dem totalen Ausschalten der Gegner entspricht dem Maß an Bedrohung, das er von ihnen erfährt" (176). Die Brisanz solcher Vergeltungswünsche ist der Vos klar. Sie will (in Auseinandersetzung mit K. Kochs Vorstellungen über den automatischen Tun-Ergehens-Zusammenhang [181-183]) die alleinige Verantwortung Gottes festhalten: Die Gebete stellen ihm die Art der Bestrafung der Feinde anheim. Das ist besonders in den härtesten Verwünschungen (vgl. Pss 109; 69:177f) gerade nicht der Fall. Außerdem bekommen wir in unserer anders strukturierten Welt große Probleme, wenn wir unbesehen alle Leiden auf menschliche Verursacher zurückführen wollten. Dennoch: Das Fluchmodell zur Beseitigung von Elend und Ungerechtigkeit kann auch heute noch Bedeutung haben, wenn es sorgfältig ethisch-theologisch durchdacht wird, wie zeitweise bei manchen Befreiungstheologen (z.B. Helder Camara; Hugo Assmann; Leonardo Boff).

Ein knapper Abschnitt behandelt die Gunkelschen "Beweggründe göttlichen Einschreitens" (183-194) und ein kleines Kapitel (Nr. 9) die Anredeformeln für die Gottheit (195-209). Der Verfasserin fällt auf, dass Gott nicht explizit als Schöpfer angerufen wird (208; und wie bewerten wir Ps 22,10 u.ä. Stellen?), sondern nur im personalen Beziehungssystem. Man könnte R. Albertz Beobachtung hinzufügen, dass in gebetsförmigen Personennamen Hinweise auf die Rettung Israels fehlen. Das gilt weitgehend auch für die Klagelieder des einzelnen. Sollte dies alles nicht eine Folge der Gruppenbindung derartiger Gebete sein? Die positive Erfahrung der fürsorglichen Gottheit (210-222) schlägt sich — oft proleptisch — in allerlei Aussagen nieder, ist aber nicht so stark und persönlich wie man das erwarten könnte (vgl. 221). Aber der Übergang vom Individuum zum "Kollektiv" ist deutlich erkennbar (221-222); damit kommt auch das gemeinschaftliche Dankfest in den Blick (vgl. Psalm 22). Eine Zusammenfassung (223-228), Bibliographie und mehrere Register schließen den lehrreichen Band ab. Am Ende profitieren Leser und Leserinnen von der geduldrigen, sorgsam

Lektüre der individuellen Klagelieder, die Chr. de Vos über lange Zeit durchgeführt hat. Sie konnte sich offensichtlich in diese wunderbaren Gedichte und Lieder einfühlen, ihr sind sie zutiefst vertraut. Manch einer mag sich allerdings fragen, ob im Gottes-, Menschen- (und Natur-)verständnis der alten Texte nicht manches für uns Fremde und Anstößige vorkommt, das wir weiter durchdenken müssen?

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Helmut UTZSCHNEIDER, *Micha* (Zürcher Bibelkommentare AT 24.1).
Zürich, Theologischer Verlag, 2005. 175 p. 15,5 × 23,5

Atractivo y estimulante por su contenido, el libro de Miqueas impone por las dificultades que entraña. Siguiendo los parámetros clásicos del género comentario y los de la colección que lo publica, la obra de H. Utzschneider presenta dos partes bien diferenciadas. En la primera parte (11-29), introducción global al libro de Miqueas, el apartado 1 ("El libro de Miqueas como Texto dramático", 11-16) es el más sorprendente y original. El segundo (16-21) contempla el libro desde dos puntos de vista. Partiendo del enraizamiento histórico de Miqueas en el siglo VIII, los oráculos se despliegan, según el autor, en el horizonte del futuro por un lado y, por otro, organizan todo el material profético en el marco de un proceso judicial que encuadra cada una de las dos partes del libro reconocidas como tales por la gran mayoría de los autores, Mi 1-5 y 6-7. El comentador reconoce que las diferencias entre los dos actos del libro son importantes. Si el primero de ellos está centrado en Sion/Jerusalén el segundo es más genérico ("la ciudad" 6,9; 7,8-9; "el pueblo" 6,3). Incluso desde el punto de vista "dramático" las diferencias son grandes y cada una de ellas puede considerarse como "complementaria" con relación a la otra. Partiendo de las perspectivas de los dos apartados precedentes, el autor dedica el tercero apartado (21-25) al perfil del profeta en sus dos vertientes: histórica y literaria. H. Utzschneider presenta la figura de Miqueas como la de un profeta afectado personalmente por su misión en tensión evidente con los profetas "oficiales" a los que se opone (3,8). ¿No sería más prudente, sin embargo, partiendo de los mismos textos, ver la oposición entre Miqueas y los otros profetas en el mensaje y el posicionamiento de cada uno de ellos y no en su origen social o institucional? El apartado 4 ("A propósito de la historia del libro de Miqueas", 25-29) es el que más corresponde a los comentarios habituales. Y aunque ya de entrada el autor renuncia a proponer una historia del libro de Miqueas desde el punto de vista literario y redaccional sus opciones son claras. Ciertos oráculos deberían situarse en el contexto histórico del siglo VIII, como por ejemplo 1,10-16 mientras que otras "palabras", como 3,12, podrían ser originales del Miqueas histórico, aunque se encontrarían actualmente en un contexto literario diferente que debe relacionarse con el final de Jerusalén en 587/586. Así pues en las cinco primeras escenas (1,2-5,3) se utilizan materiales pre-exílicos (1,10-16; 2,1-5; 2,6-11; 3,12) y ven la luz como obra escrita probablemente en

la época exílica. 5,9-14 es post-exílico. Por lo que toca a 6,1-7,7 habría que pensar en los siglos V-IV; la publicación final incluyendo 7,8-20 y 5,1-5 no debería situarse antes del siglo III. Desde el punto de vista de la historia de la redacción H. Utzschneider acepta, salvo pequeños detalles, la posición de B.M. Zapff, *Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Michabuch im Kontext des Dodekapropheten* (BZAW 256; Berlin 1997).

La bibliografía, 171-175, necesariamente selectiva, propone los dos capítulos acostumbrados: por una parte los comentarios y por otra el resto de la bibliografía relevante.

La segunda parte de la obra (30-170) presenta, al hilo del texto bíblico, las distintas unidades literarias que el autor considera tales partiendo de la falsilla en la que H. Utzschneider enmarca el conjunto del libro: un texto dramático. Desde este punto de vista, las dos grandes partes del libro de Miqueas de los comentadores clásicos (1-5 y 6-7) se convierten en dos "Actos" en el sentido dramático del término y cada uno de ellos está compuesto de diferentes escenas; éstas a su vez comprenden varias "entradas", es decir, las intervenciones de los distintos personajes de la escena. Cada una de las escenas comprende una introducción, la traducción del texto bíblico que el autor atribuye a distintos personajes y el comentario propiamente dicho que se focaliza en dichas intervenciones que forman una unidad de discurso. Así por ejemplo, en el acto segundo, 6,1-7,20, la primera escena está compuesta por 6,1-8 que a su vez comprende 4 intervenciones que el autor va a comentar por separado: 6,1-2 que H. Utzschneider asigna al profeta, 6,3-5 a Yhwh, 6,6-7 a un representante del pueblo y 6,8 de nuevo al profeta. Miqueas es el enunciador de 6,1-2, pero su discurso tiene tres destinatarios: 6,1a el lector o el público, 6,1b Yhwh y 6,2 las montañas.

Es relativamente frecuente considerar el libro de Job como texto con claras resonancias dramáticas. También Sofonías ha sido interpretado por P.A. House, *Zephaniah. A Prophetic Drama* (JSOTS 69; Sheffield 1988) como un drama. Si la puesta en escena del libro de Job no plantea excesivos problemas y ha sido realizada con éxito últimamente en varias ocasiones, otra cosa es hacerlo con Miqueas. Es evidente que la diversidad de personajes aludidos, interpelados o supuestos es patente. Otra cosa es que dicha diversidad de personajes dé pie para "organizar" el libro como un drama en cuanto tal. Pero hay que reconocer al autor el interés de una puesta en escena de Miqueas para un buen entendimiento del texto por el lector actual. Así, por ejemplo, en 2,1-5 donde las dificultades del texto parecen diluirse gracias a la atribución de los diversos versículos a Miqueas, Yhwh o al pueblo cuyas opiniones citaría el profeta (2,4b-5). Y si en 6,1-8, primera escena del segundo acto (6-7), es evidente que Yhwh habla en los versículos 3-5, el pueblo en 6,6-7 y el profeta en 6,8, más problemática aparece la opinión según la cual Miqueas se dirigiría en 6,1b a Yhwh. En la configuración actual del texto, el que habla es Yhwh (6,1a) y por lo tanto parece difícil que el profeta, que es su portavoz aunque sea como figura literaria, se dirija a Yhwh. El problema es clásico: leer Miqueas teniendo en cuenta el juego de personajes y la interacción entre ellos en perspectiva dramática puede ser un buen instrumento de trabajo, a condición de no forzar el texto imponiéndole un único esquema de lectura.

A título de ejemplo de la exégesis de H. Utzschneider se pueden

considerar algunos elementos de uno de los textos más emblemáticos del libro de Miqueas, la primera escena del segundo acto según los parámetros del autor: Mi 6,1-8. Los problemas planteados por los dos primeros versículos son conocidos. Según H. Utzschneider, la introducción de 1a estaría dirigida al “público”, es decir al lector, no a un destinatario “interno” al texto y serviría de pórtico no a 1b-2 sino a las escenas siguientes (¿cuáles?), incluso a todo el segundo acto (6-7). Posible. H. Utzschneider trata de resolver la tensión entre 1b y 2 haciendo que las montañas se conviertan en “copartícipes del proceso”, lo cual desde el punto de vista dramático queda bien pero cuadra mal con el texto. En efecto, en 1b, cualquiera que sea el destinatario, las montañas aparecen como el acusado de un juicio (*rîb*). Desde este punto de vista las montañas en 1b y el pueblo en 2 se encuentran en estricto paralelo; ambos son objeto/destinatarios de un *rîb*, reconociendo sin embargo que, más allá del *rîb*, el paralelo es semántico y no de vocabulario. Incluso la traducción propuesta por H. Utzschneider va en este sentido. La dificultad por lo tanto persiste. Se presenta a las montañas en 1b como acusadas, pero a continuación desaparecen de la escena y el único *rîb* que desarrolla el texto es el del pueblo, anunciado en 2. Difícilmente se puede decir por lo tanto que 6,1-2 constituye una “presentación de conjunto” consistente (¿coherente?).

El discurso de 6-7 puede considerarse como la respuesta del pueblo, acusado por Yhwh en 3-5, aunque esté en primera persona del singular. Tradicionalmente se ha considerado este discurso como una respuesta en el que el pueblo “exagera” las exigencias sacrificiales del culto casi “ad absurdum”. El comentador recuerda que las exigencias de la Torá en materia sacrificial no están muy alejadas, si se hacen números, del discurso del pueblo. Ahí radicaría una crítica del culto por la cantidad de ofrendas que exige, es decir por el peso, la carga que supone. A la queja de Yhwh: ¿en qué te he apenado?, respondería el discurso del pueblo que enumera las pesadas exigencias del culto de Yhwh. Tanto más cuanto que estas obligaciones incluirían el sacrificio de los primogénitos y supondrían una cierta tensión con las perspectivas de las bendiciones del Deuteronomio. La idea es interesante pero supone que el texto es netamente posterior al exilio y que la Torá existe y funciona tal y como se presenta actualmente. Lo que si es cierto, como subraya H. Utzschneider, es que la posición de los profetas y la de la Torá respecto al culto aparecen en contraste e incluso en una cierta contradicción. El comentario de la respuesta de 8, que el autor atribuye lógicamente al profeta, es pertinente al subrayar la dimensión relacional (expresión semántica e históricamente diferente y más apropiada que la manida alianza) de lo que Yhwh espera de su pueblo. Pero es también verdad que la reacción del pueblo es cultural y, en la lógica del conjunto de 6,1-8, hay un desfase entre la respuesta cultural del pueblo (aunque critique la dimensión cuantitativa del mismo) a la queja de Yhwh y la exigencia final de 8 en boca del profeta que se sitúa en otro nivel distinto del culto.

En resumen, el comentario de H. Utzschneider es sugerente y atractivo y requiere matices. Y aunque no siempre convence, reclama argumentos de quien no comparte su opinión.

Novum Testamentum

Hartwig THYEN, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 6). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005. xii-796 p. 17 × 24.

Der hier vorgelegte Kommentar krönt ein Lebenswerk. Der Verf., emeritierter Professor für Neutestamentliche Exegese an der Universität Heidelberg, hat sich seit seinen Studien in Marburg und Mainz mit dem Johannesevangelium befasst, wobei der Einfluss seines Marburger Lehrers Rudolf Bultmann besonders deutlich nachgewirkt hat. Lange Zeit wirkte sich das literarkritische Modell Bultmanns zum Joh(annesevangelium) nicht nur bei Thyen aus. Verf. hatte es über längere Zeit fortentwickelt zu einem Modell "Grundschrift – Redaktion", wobei die "johanneische Redaktion" immer größere Textanteile für sich in Anspruch nahm und vor allem die Texte über den Lieblingsjünger einschloss. Dies führte dazu, dass Verf. schon 1977 den Endredaktor den eigentlichen "Evangelisten" nannte. Auf die Dauer konnte dies Modell den Verf. nicht befriedigen, und so kam er — auch im Gespräch mit den Kollegen beiderseits des Atlantiks — zu dem Schluss, das ganze Johannesevangelium sei vom ersten bis zum letzten Vers als "kohärentes, hochpoetisches *literarisches* Werk zu begreifen" (V). Auf jede Form von Quellen- und Literarkritik wird darum in diesem Band ebenso wie verzichtet wie auf die Rekonstruktion literarischer Schichten nach Abschluss eines ersten Entwurfs des Evangeliums. Verf. legt über diese methodologische Option in seinem kurzen Vorwort Rechenschaft ab, in dem er auch zugibt, zu seiner heutigen Sicht nur über "zahllose Wege und Irrwege" gelangt zu sein (ebd.). Einen literarischen Einfluss lässt der Verf. nur für die Schriften des Alten Testaments und die drei Synoptischen Evangelien gelten. Dieser wird freilich auch eher literarisch als "Intertextualität" als diachron im Sinne von Quellenforschung verstanden (ebd.).

Das Joh gliedert sich nach Verf. im Anschluss an den Prolog (Joh 1,1-18) in zwei Hauptteile: "Erster Teil: Das Buch des Zeugnisses (1,19–10,42)" und "Zweiter Teil: Das Buch der δόξα Jesu (11,1–21,25)". Bultmanns Unterscheidung zwischen Jesu Offenbarung seiner δόξα vor der Welt in der ersten Hälfte des Evangeliums und ihrer Offenbarung vor den Jüngern in der zweiten ist damit ebenso aufgegeben wie Bultmanns Zäsur nach 12,50. Mit guten Gründen optiert Verf. seit längerer Zeit für einen Schnitt nach Joh 10,42, da in 10,40-42 noch einmal das Täuferzeugnis aufgegriffen wird und sich so eine Klammer zu Joh 1 bildet und da die Kap. 11–12 schon stark vom Thema der sich ankündigen Passion Jesu bestimmt sind.

Über diese Grundeinteilung des Joh legt sich bei Verf. freilich eine andere, von Gesichtspunkten der Erzählforschung bestimmte. Danach gliedert Verf. mit G. Østenstad das Joh in sieben Akte mit jeweils mehreren Szenen. Im Einzelfall kann es hier zu Überschneidungen mit der Grundeinteilung kommen, indem der vierte Akt (Joh 8,12–12,50) in zwei Hälften unterteilt wird, von denen die erste (Joh 8,12–10,42) noch dem ersten Teil angehört, die zweite (Joh 11,1–12,50) dem zweiten. Kennt ein als "Szene" gekennzeichnete Abschnitt mehrfachen Wechsel von Akteuren und Schauplätzen, dann spricht Verf. hier (wie in Joh 9) von "Episoden".

Wie wirkt sich nun der vom Verf. gewählte methodologische Ansatz aus? Sicher erlaubt er, die Texte des Joh einheitlicher von ihrer vorliegenden Gestalt her auszulegen. Das zeigt sich schon bei der Interpretation des Johannesprologs. Die zahllosen Vorschläge, die einen oder mehrere vorjohanneische Hymnen und deren johanneische, evtl. auch nachjohanneische Bearbeitung unterscheiden, werden vom Verf. ins Reich der Spekulation verwiesen, und heraus kommt eine kohärente, stark an der Theologie des Abschnitts orientierte Auslegung. Die auf den Täufer bezogenen Abschnitte Vv. 6-8 und 15 werden literarisch gesehen als "Einschub" (77) erkannt, fallen damit aber als "Parenthesen" (100) nicht aus der sonst zu beobachtenden literarischen Verfahrensweise des Vierten Evangelisten heraus. Eine kleine Schwäche des gewählten Ansatzes zeigt sich bei der Deutung von Joh 1,5, wo Verf. übersetzt "doch die Finsternis hat es nicht überwältigt", dabei aber die Nähe zu den Versen 10 und 11 herunterspielt, die auch ohne die Hypothese eines vorliegenden Hymnus auffällt. Hier ist eindeutig davon die Rede, dass die Welt den Logos nicht erkannte und die Seinen (für Verf. das jüdische Volk) ihn nicht aufnahmen.

Testfälle zur Überprüfung der Hypothese von der literarischen Einheitlichkeit des Joh sind in solchen Fällen gegeben, bei denen Bultmann und die sich an ihn anschließende Forschung zwischen Evangelisten und Redaktion unterscheiden. Als Beispiel mag Joh 5,24-29, der Abschnitt über das Gericht in der Rede Jesu im Anschluss an die Heilung des Gelähmten dienen. An die Stelle einer Abfolge "Evangelist" (5,24-27) und "kirchliche Redaktion" (5,28f.) setzt Verf. eine literarisch einheitliche Abfolge von (physischer) Auferstehung einiger in der ersten Versgruppe und endzeitlicher Auferstehung aller in der zweiten. Der "Menschensohn" wird dabei nicht im Sinne von Dan 7,13f, sondern als "Menschenkind" verstanden. Die Schwäche dieses Vorschlags liegt u. a. in der Annahme einer physischen Auferweckung einiger Toter in Vv. 24-27, die sich an dem durch ein Perfekt ausgedrückten bereits erfolgten Übergang vom Tod zum Leben nach V. 24 stößt. Alles spricht dabei dafür, hier dem "Leben" seinen johanneischen Vollsinn zu belassen. Man vermisst an dieser Stelle ein Eingehen auf die dreibändige "Johanneische Eschatologie" von J. Frey (1997-2000), die zwar im Literaturverzeichnis erscheint, aber offenbar nicht berücksichtigt ist.

Ein weiterer Schlüsseltext ist mit Joh 6 gegeben. Der Verf. plädiert mit guten Gründen und einer wachsenden Zahl von Autoren für die literarische Einheitlichkeit des Kapitels. Damit entfällt der Vorschlag Bultmanns, die Verweise auf die "Auferweckung am Jüngsten Tage" in den Vv. 39.40.44 und die "eucharistischen" Verse 51c-58 einem "kirchlichen Redaktor" zuzuschreiben. In V. 51c sieht Verf. mit H. Schürmann mit gutem Grund eher einen Verweis auf den Tod Jesu am Kreuz als direkt auf die Eucharistie. Zu dieser scheint der Text jedoch überzuleiten. Dies wird freilich von Verf. vehement bestritten. Nach ihm bleibt die ganze Rede vom "Essen des Fleisches" des Menschensohnes und vom "Trinken seines Blutes" metaphorisch und spricht wie die vorhergehenden Redeabschnitte von der Annahme Jesu im Glauben. Das Hauptargument liegt darin, dass die im Text vorausgesetzten jüdischen Hörer Jesu unmöglich einen wörtlichen Sinn der Worte Jesu als Aufforderung zum Genuss seines Fleisches und Blutes hätten verstehen und annehmen können. Gerade bei dieser jüdischen Zuhörerschaft liegt freilich das

Problem. Viele Indizien sprechen dafür, das Kap. 6 des Joh als Erweiterung eines ursprünglichen Textes anzusehen, so die schwierige Einordnung zwischen Kap. 5 und 7, die stärkere Abhängigkeit von den Synoptischen Evangelien, insbesondere Mk 6,32–8,32 (vom Verf. gesehen), die stärkere Rolle des Petrus, das Paschafest, das Jesus offenbar nicht mehr in Jerusalem, sondern in Galiläa feiert, und eben das eucharistische Vokabular. Mit B. Lindars und R. Kieffer neigt deswegen der Rezensent dazu, das ganze Kapitel einer Bearbeitung des Joh zuzuschreiben, womit sich dann auch die Nähe zu Joh 21 erklärt (vgl. J. Beutler, "Joh 6 als christliche 'relecture' des Pascharahmens im Johannesevangelium", *Damit sie das Leben haben (Joh 10,10). Festschrift für Walter Kirchschräger zum 60. Geburtstag* [Hrsg. R. Scoralick] [Zürich 2007] 43–58).

Am Kap. 21 erweist sich noch einmal der gewählte methodologische Ansatz und steht damit auf dem Prüfstand. Mit dem von ihm geschätzten F. Overbeck unterscheidet Verf. einen Schlussabschnitt Joh 20,30–21,25. Der sog. "erste Schluss" des Joh in Joh 20,30f steht damit am Anfang des Abschlusskapitels und bildet mit den Schlussversen 21,24f. eine chiasmatische Inklusion ("schreiben" / "Bücher"). Literarisch greift Johannes nach Verf. (wie zumeist gesehen) auf Lk 5,1–11 zurück, frühere Stadien der Überlieferung (im Sinne von R. Pesch) werden als spekulativ zurückgewiesen. Wichtig ist vor allem die Sicht des Verf. vom Sinn der Abschlussverse (21,20–25). Sie dienen nach ihm der Legitimierung des Lieblingsjüngers als Verfasser des Vierten Evangeliums. Erneut steht hier F. Overbeck und sein 1911 postum von C. A. Bernoulli herausgegebenes Werk "Das Johannesevangelium. Studien zur Kritik seiner Erforschung" Pate. Zunächst einmal muss der Ausleger sich entscheiden, die Verse 24f. in Joh 21 nicht als Nachtrag eines Herausgeberkreises, sondern als ursprünglichen Bestandteil seines Kontextes anzusehen. Das hier begegnende "Wir" wird dann vom Verf. als "plural auctoris" (795) gedeutet, mit dem der Evangelist von sich selber spricht. Nach F. C. Baur, F. Overbeck und nun auch Verf. ist in dem Lieblingsjünger der Zebedäussohn Johannes zu sehen (der bereits ab Joh 1,35ff. eingeführt wird und wohl auch hinter dem "anderen Jünger" von Joh 18,15 steht). Diese Gestalt ist freilich pseudepigraphisch verwendet und als solche ein Konstrukt des realen Autors, mit dem er seinem Werk die notwendige apostolische Autorität verleiht. Versuche, den realen Autor textextern (etwa als den ephesinischen Presbyter Johannes) zu bestimmen, lehnt Verf. als hoffnungslos und letztlich irrelevant ab. Der Name Johannes könne eher – mit Overbeck – im Blick auf den anderen Johannes gewählt sein, der als der qualifizierte Zeuge Jesu die erste Hälfte des Joh bestimmt: Johannes der Täufer, so dass Matthias Grünewald den Isenheimer Altar historisch verfehlt, aber theologisch richtig den einen und den anderen Johannes als Zeugen unter das Kreuz Jesu gestellt habe.

Gerade dieser letzte Vorschlag dürfte Aufmerksamkeit beanspruchen. Dabei wäre zu vermeiden, die Frage nach dem literarischen Verfasser des Joh (also dem "impliziten Autor") alternativ zu derjenigen nach dem wirklichen (dem "realen") Verfasser zu sehen. Man könnte also mit Verf. den Lieblingsjünger als den vom Text insinuierten Verfasser ansehen und diesen (mit der Tradition seit Irenäus) mit dem Zebedäiden Johannes identifizieren und gleichzeitig nach dem realen Autor etwa im Sinne der ephesinischen Tradition fragen (wie dies nicht zuletzt M. Hengel tut).

Rückblickend lässt sich mit aller Vorsicht vermuten, dass der hier vorgelegte Kommentar in seinen literarischen Prämissen umstritten bleiben, in seiner Theologie freilich von bleibendem Wert sein wird. Damit würde Ähnliches wie von Thyens Lehrer Rudolf Bultmann gelten. Wie dieser hält Verf. konsequent an der Herausforderung fest, die damit gegeben ist, dass das göttliche Wort, das den Titel θεός voll für sich beanspruchen kann (vgl. die Inklusionen Joh 1,1.18 und 20,28), in der Zeit und Geschichte Fleisch wurde. Daran ist mit dem Verf. auch im jüdisch-christlichen Dialog kompromisslos festzuhalten.

Abschließend sei noch auf die außerordentlich umfangreiche Bibliographie hingewiesen, auf die im Verlauf des Kommentars auch immer wieder zurückgegriffen wird. Eine Reihe von störenden Druckfehlern wäre bei einer zweiten Auflage zu verbessern.

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Richard H. BELL, *The Irrevocable Call of God. An Inquiry into Paul's Theology of Israel* (WUNT 184). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005. xxv-550 p. 16 × 23,5. €99

The third monograph by Richard Bell in the area of Pauline studies is closely related to his previous two (*Provoked to Jealousy. The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9–11* [WUNT 2.63; Tübingen 1994] and *No one seeks for God. An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1,18–3,20* [WUNT 106; Tübingen 1998]). Consisting of 11 chapters, the book is primarily a theological study (viii-ix), although it includes exegesis, often drawn from the earlier works, of relevant passages from the proto-Pauline letters. In two chapters (9 and 10), Bell also considers current theological problems concerning Israel. The main new contribution of the book is therefore Bell's synthesis of Paul's theology of Israel, including its application to contemporary issues. In contrast to the "new perspective", Bell (an Anglican) has a more traditional "Lutheran" approach to Paul, resulting from his studies in Tübingen with P. Stuhlmacher, O. Hofius, and M. Hengel (vii-viii; 152-155). Regarding Israel, Bell rejects the substitution model and affirms Israel's status as God's people (vii-viii; 156).

The first 7 chapters, which consider Paul's life and writings roughly in chronological order, treat the following topics and passages: Paul's early life (1-37); Paul's conversion and early missionary efforts (1 Thess 2,13-16) (38-84); Paul's critique of intertestamental Judaism (and Bell's critique of the "new perspective") (85-156); the question of whether Israel is still the people of God (Gal 3-4) (157-217); the hardening of Israel (218-237); Israel's final salvation (Rom 11,25-27) (238-270); and God's irrevocable call of Israel (Rom 11) (271-291). Chapter 8 (292-337), entitled "Towards a Coherent Theology of Israel", provides the synthesis of Paul's thought in its

development from 1 Thessalonians to Romans and in comparison to other writings of the NT. There follow the two chapters (338-375, 376-407) which relate Paul's theology to current questions (e.g., the Holocaust, the promise of the land, millenarianism, Jewish identity, and Christian mission to Jews). The last chapter (408-422) gives a concluding assessment of Paul as a "philosemite", but also includes Bell's comments on how Christianity supersedes Judaism. There follows a long bibliography (423-489), concentrating on works in English and German. Indeed, one of the strengths of Bell's study is the increased exposure it gives to German scholars, few of whose works are available in English (e.g., O. Hofius, M. Theobald); there are, however, some gaps in the bibliography regarding important authors in other languages and recent works. The book concludes with three helpful indexes of authors (491-504), references (505-536), and subjects and names (537-550). The text, replete with useful footnotes, is clear and well-written, with relatively few typographical errors.

Of interest in chapter 1 is Bell's position (following W. C. van Unnik) that Paul "had Aramaic/Hebrew as a mother tongue" (8). Since Paul's OT quotations generally follow the Greek LXX, however, Bell suggests that Paul "made a deliberate decision to move over to using the Septuagint when he became apostle to the Gentiles" (31). Regarding Paul's education, Bell (influenced by Hengel) is skeptical "that Paul was versed in ancient rhetoric" (34) and stresses instead Paul's Pharisaic background (cf. Acts 22,3). The Hellenistic influence on Paul thus came "through Judaism" (36). Bell's *a priori* skepticism regarding Paul's rhetorical training affects his exegetical methodology; i.e., he tends to pay little attention to Paul's argumentation and instead interprets Paul's statements in light of theological principles, such as *sola fide*, *sola gratia* (136) and "pessimistic anthropology" (134). A good example is Rom 9,6-29, which Bell discusses mainly in terms of predestination (218-233) rather than in terms of its rhetorical function as a proof of the proposition on the divine word in 9,6a. (Bell does briefly note the importance of 9,6a [212].) At times, Bell solves exegetical difficulties simply by appeal to "theological" reasons (80; 263; cf. *Jealousy*, 139).

Bell explains in chapter 2 the importance of Paul's conversion in shaping his theology and in giving him a model "as to how Israel will be finally saved" (45; cf. 270). From a consideration of Paul's persecution by Jews during his early missionary activity, Bell moves into the book's first exegetical section, a study of 1 Thess 2,13-16. He concludes that the views in this passage regarding the Jews "cannot be reconciled with Romans 9-11" (61; 70-71; 292-293). Though he recognizes the passage's polemical tone, Bell does not consider the context of Jewish obstruction of Paul's Gentile mission to be a sufficient explanation for it (see, e.g., A.J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* [AB 32B; New York 2000] 178-179). He argues instead for a marked development in Paul's thought (61-62; 217; 410-411).

In chapter 3, in a section entitled "Did Jews Believe in Salvation by Works?" (95-131) where he considers a number of intertestamental and rabbinic texts, Bell critiques the "new perspective" and affirms that "all strands of Judaism at about the time of Paul supported salvation by works" (131). Bell's critique of the "new perspective" extends also to its motivations: it is "partly driven by 'political correctness'" (153). Bell's reading of Paul is

itself, however, not without difficulty. Bell affirms, e.g., that “assurance of salvation” is part of Paul’s message (150; 233), even though he admits that in passages such as 1 Cor 10,1-13 “the idea of ‘perseverance of the Saints’ is not at its strongest” (185). (On this point, see the recent essay by J.D.G. Dunn, «The New Perspective on Paul: whence, what, whither?», *The New Perspective on Paul* [WUNT 185; Tübingen 2005] 1-88, esp. 76.) Bell concludes by affirming “that the traditional protestant view of Judaism and Paul is roughly correct” (155), except in its denial that the Jews are still the people of God (156; 217).

Bell analyzes Gal 3–4 and 6,16 in chapter 4 and concludes that in Galatians Paul has a substitution model in which the Church “replaces Israel as the people of God” (180). However, Bell argues that Paul does not have such a model in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, and Romans, and hence that there is development in his thought. (As a side note, one finds in this chapter the sweeping statement that “any typology is a by-product of something more fundamental: myth” [186].)

In chapters 5-7, Bell considers the high point of Paul’s teaching on Israel in Romans 9–11, in which Israel’s abiding election is affirmed (11,29) and its final salvation (11,26) is announced. In light of 11,29 and on “theological” grounds (263), Bell (following Hofius) interprets “all Israel” (11,26) diachronically as referring to the salvation of every single Jew throughout history (265; cf. *Jealousy*, 141), even though the LXX usage would favor a synchronic interpretation. Bell also affirms that this salvation is by faith in Christ and will occur at the parousia, in a way analogous to Paul’s own conversion (266-270). He realizes that “the only possibility for Jews who have died before the parousia to receive the gospel from Christ is by a resurrection from the dead” (cf. Rom 11,15) (256). Bell does not explore, however, the questions of eschatology raised by this proposal (cf. Heb 9,27-28).

To explain “the diverse nature of the New Testament teaching on Israel” (413, n. 12), Bell applies in chapter 8 a model of development, drawing upon the work of H. Gese. Bell concludes, however, that after Romans and with regard to Israel, “the tradition history ‘degenerates’”, e.g., in Ephesians (317). (For a different view, see J.-N. Aletti, «Les difficultés ecclésiologiques de la lettre aux Éphésiens. De quelques suggestions», *Bib* 85 [2004] 457-474). Bell explains this problem by considering that the Bible “is not itself the word of God”; rather, the word of God “can be perceived *through the bible*” (322). A *Sachkritik* of the biblical texts, using as the criterion for truth Luther’s phrase “what urges Christ”, is therefore necessary “in order to seek after the word of God” (324; 333). The *Sachkritik* concerns not only the epistles after Romans, but also 1 Thess 2,13-16, which “comes to be criticized not because it is considered ‘antisemitic’ but because Christ is not urged” (334), and Galatians, which is “inconsistent in that the abiding election of Israel is denied” (334, n. 194). It is not clear that Bell’s proposed combination of tradition-historical analysis and *Sachkritik* avoids various risks. Those from ecclesial traditions having a high view of the inspiration of Scripture (cf. 32) may have difficulties with Bell’s handling of texts.

Since Bell is trying to cover much ground theologically, his exegetical treatment of texts is occasionally too brief. In some cases, Bell refers to the more detailed exegesis found in his previous monographs. At other times,

however, even his earlier works do not have an adequate treatment of the text in question. One example regards the apparent contradiction between Rom 9,27 ("the remnant will be saved") and Rom 11,26 ("all Israel will be saved"). Bell dismisses in an *a priori* way any attempt to resolve this difficulty, claiming that to do so is to "impoverish the dynamic nature of the text" (264, n. 117). Yet he unnecessarily heightens the tension between the two affirmations by translating Rom 9,27 as "only a remnant will be saved" (233-234; cf. *Jealousy*, 186), never citing the Greek text, in which the word "only" does not occur, nor giving a justification for his interpretation.

Regarding Christology, Bell is critical of scholars who compromise the centrality of Christ (414-417). He defends a *solus Christus* theology (329, 333) and even labels as "a major heresy" the "widespread belief that Jews (and those of other religions) do not need the gospel" (403). Given Bell's concerns, certain of his Christological statements are therefore rather surprising: e.g., "in becoming a human person Christ was made to be a sinner in a 'cosmic' sense (but not necessarily in an ethical sense)" (43, n. 23); "an infallible Christ is a docetic Christ" (311); "Christ suffers as man and God (!) on the cross" (371; Bell's exclamation).

Regarding the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, Bell rightly emphasizes that Christianity's relationship with Judaism is unique (343-344), even if he jumps too quickly to the conclusion (343; 404, n. 119) that all other religions (including Islam) do not worship the same God as Christians and Jews (cf. Acts 17,25-28). Bell rejects the substitution model since Israel's election as the people of God abides (vii-viii; 156; 216-217; 419). At the same time, he maintains a supersessionist approach (417-419) in that "salvation is found only in Christ and the law now has no rôle in salvation" (419; 161). This distinction is possibly confusing since the verbs "substitute" and "supersede" are used synonymously by other authors. Bell at times takes "supersede" in its etymological sense of "to be superior to" rather than "to take the place of": e.g., he writes that a "Christian theologian finds grace superior to works" (adding that "a Jewish theologian could argue the converse") (418). The distinction, however, seems to lie more in the object under consideration: according to Bell, the Church does not replace Israel, but the gospel does replace the law (161; 417).

Regarding recent views on Paul, on the one hand, Bell is critical of those authors (e.g., Stendahl, Gaston, and Gager) who, he believes, "sell out" the gospel by minimizing "the significance of Christ for Israel" (415-416). On the other hand, he is concerned that with the "new perspective" there is the "danger of making even more serious negative theological comments about the Jewish people" (420). He therefore advocates the maintenance of "the traditional Protestant understanding of Paul's critique of Israel's religion" (420).

Readers can judge for themselves whether Bell's defense of the "Lutheran" Paul is convincing and whether he has succeeded in presenting a "positive theology of Israel" (388). While his work is provocative and in some ways problematic, it nonetheless is a valuable study for the wealth of information it provides and the challenging questions it addresses.

Varia

William G. DEVER, *Did God Have a Wife? Archeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel*. Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U.K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005. xiv - 344 p. 16 × 23,5. \$ 25.00 – £ 15.95.

The question posed by the title is answered in the affirmative: before the exile, Yhwh did have a wife, and her name was Asherah. In today's biblical scholarship, this position is mainstream. The basic thesis of the book under review is not so much argued again, or supported by additional research as an attempt to popularize the notion of a biblical (or Israelite and Judaeon pre-biblical) Goddess. Dever presents himself as a secular humanist with an evangelical past, and if his personal history should help any fundamentalist to come to terms with biblical and historical scholarship, all the better. The book might also be useful for scholars with a main interest outside the fields of archaeology and religious history who want to update their basic reading of days long past; the – too few – illustrations might prove especially useful in this respect, e.g. the shrine (rather than “temple”) of 8th (or 7th) century BC Arad (174), showing two *matzevot* (for Yhwh and His Asherah) rather than one, as in photographs of a previous reconstruction. The same visual experience could help to convey to the archaeological lay person the simple fact that more or less all she or he is given in terms of archaeology for popular consumption are (theory-based) reconstructions, not “facts” as found in the ground.

This is to say that “Did God Have a Wife?” is a very personal book and needs to be appreciated as some kind of intellectual conclusion of a researcher's life dedicated to the investigation of the biblical world. Dever set out from the Harvard school of Wright's “Biblical Archaeology Movement”, which looked for traces of “the mighty deeds of God” in the material record. A certain disregard for critical biblical scholarship, which is not always wholly justified, might derive from this background (in spite of the fact that Dever now uses one or the other result of biblical criticism, such as the notion of “Deuteronomistic History”, with some profit). Dever became seminal for the archaeology of Israel/Palestine when he brought the concepts and methods of the American “New Archeology” to the Holy Land (hence the missing “a” in the subtitle). New “archeology” (as opposed to old “archaeology”) represents a social scientific (rather than scholarly or philological) approach to the past. As “processual arch[a]eology” it is now mainstream in the archaeology of Israel, and under attack from a new generation of young Turks, the post-modern “post-processualists”. On its way to the present world, archeology lost its nomothetic fervor (looking for “social laws” of an epistemological status equal with the laws of nature) and became content with probabilistic globalizations (are there still many scientists around who would deny that the laws of physics are nothing else?). For the past twenty years, and in his virulent (and sometimes quite violent) fight against

the so-called “minimalists”, Dever has also turned against archeologists (like Israel Finkelstein) who, to him, seem to undermine the foundations of Western Culture by, e.g., proposing a cultural chronology and history of early Israel different from the versions which Dever favours; and this in spite of the fact that Finkelstein is probably the brightest and most effective former pupil of the early Dever active today. And what is the difference between “a student of religion ... sometimes filled with nostalgia for what I suspect is ‘a biblical world that never was’ (xi)” and a “minimalist”?

The uncomfortable position of the sorcerer’s apprentice who now wants to stem the flow of water he had initiated (and, at the same time, cannot avoid using and enjoying that same water when it comes in handy) also seems to characterize the author of the present book. The self-declared purpose of the book is, as far as I see, exactly “a secular understanding of the Sacred” which is declared both impossible and undesirable on page 11: a (social) science of religion “would miss the point” because “Religion is not about science: empirical evidence: the testing of laws [I read: theories]; and predictions” (ibid.) – which does not say more than that religion cannot claim to proclaim scientific truth, or science, including the science of religion, religious truth. When Dever, in consequence, demands with Eliade that “the observer must become a participant”, he demands the impossible in all fields of social scientific study of the past, simply because we cannot go there. He also embraces here one of the approaches to social studies which the late Marvin Harris labelled “obscurantist”. It is perfectly possible to study religion as a social construct (which says quite a lot about the constructing society) without paying any attention to the question of whether the propositions constituting this religion’s set of beliefs are true or untrue. But the access to a scientific study of social constructs (which are “facts” for any theory dealing with them) is blocked by the distinction between “facts” and “social constructs” which is added to the burden of guilt to be picked up by the “postmodernists” (8-9), as if the distinction between “true by nature” and “true by convention” were not introduced by Aristotle, at the latest. From the point of view of empirical social studies of religion, Dever’s construction of a binominal opposition between “state religion” and “folk religion” is especially disappointing (5): Literate – Popular; Texts – Artefacts; Canon – Improvisation; Belief – Practice; Mythology – Magic; Verbal – Symbolic; Theology – Cult; Ideology – Action; Intellectual – Emotive; Dogma – Praxis; Rational – Mystical; Ceremonial – Ritual; Public – Private; Social – Individual; National – Local.

I assume that every student of Ancient Near Eastern religions has encountered these parameters either at both ends of the political spectrum (from family to empire), like “Symbolic”, “Cult”, and “Public”, or not at all (like “Private”, which might not have existed at all as a social sphere in the ancient Near East). In the specific cases of Israel and Judah, this opposition, over-simplified as it is, disregards the temporal and spatial differences on both the levels of “state” and “folk”. When, where and to what degree the state did interfere with local religion is exactly the most disputed problem in the present discussion on the religions of Israel and Judah, and there seems to be a long way to go before even the most basic controversies are settled. Dever’s distinction serves the hidden agenda to find a place in the society of pre-exilic Israel and Judah where the biblical tradition might have persisted

without leaving any trace in the religious practices of these societies as observable through archeology. That old age proves, or at least supports, a religion's dogmatic claims, is a notion inherited from the Ancient world which does not necessarily appeal to each and everybody today. The assumption that those traditions and bits and pieces of religious literature of pre-exilic vintage which became part of the Bible simply did not constitute some "proto-bible", "pre-canon" or "incipient scripture" before they were merged into the Torah and the Prophets seems, at least to me, to form the less complicated hypothesis in answer to the result of the "archeology of biblical religion". But that there was no Bible before the Bible, not even in Israel, may be inconceivable to an author who forms a concept of Israelite and Judaeon "state religion" in the image and likeness of post-enlightenment Protestantism. To end this paragraph on a less critical note: Dever's appraisal of "folk religion" exhales the all the joys of discovery, viz. the discovery that religion is not necessarily always just a set of beliefs but may actually have been – or even be – an ubiquitous practice both on the individual and the social level.

And, of course, Dever is always a source of brilliant rhetoric and pinpoint expressions, which he either coins or circulates. "The Care and Feeding of the Gods" (p. 5 - an expression inherited from H. Frankfort) says a lot about what distinguishes 7th century BC Judean religion from 21st AD century Christian persuasions; I will use it in the classroom.

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Oded LIPSCHITS, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*. Judah under Babylonian Rule, Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 2005. xiv+474 p. 15,5 × 23,5. \$47.50

In *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, Oded Lipschits sheds much needed light onto the "Dark Age" of Judah's history, that is, the period between the fall of Jerusalem in the early 6th Century and its rise beginning in the late 6th Century B.C.E. Although his main purpose is to present "an extensive, comprehensive profile of the period of Babylonian rule over Judah", in the process he demonstrates the impact of this era on the demography and polity of southern Levant throughout the Persian to Roman periods. Having established a historical profile of the Babylonian period, he also evaluates biblical historiography in order to highlight the biases and purposes which underlie the various books that arise from or describe this period.

Lipschits prepares the reader for his presentation of the fall and rise of Jerusalem by reviewing the geopolitical and historical background to the final phase of the kingdom of Judah in chapter 1. This background focuses on first the geopolitical legacy of the Assyrians, whose organization of the Levant

would endure (with modification) throughout the brief Egyptian and longer Babylonian and Persian periods. Lipschits describes then the historical background to the demise of the Assyrian empire and the struggle between Egypt and Babylon for control of the Levant.

Having established this background, Lipschits then describes Judah under Babylonian rule. In the early phase of Babylonian interference in the affairs of the Levant the Babylonians adopted a lenient policy toward small kingdoms like Judah, which enjoyed relative freedom in return for heavy taxes and support (in personnel and kind) for the Babylonian army. Nebuchadnezzar's failure to conquer Egypt coupled with revolts by Judean kings, led to a shift in Babylonian policy in the first decade of the 6th Century B.C.E., a shift that would see vassal kingdoms like Judah incorporated into the Babylonian empire as provinces. This shift is showcased in the fall of Jerusalem and exile of King Zedekiah alongside the rise of Mizpah and appointment of Gedaliah as first governor of the Babylonian province. These were not successive events, but rather overlapped as the Babylonians had already established an administration for their anticipated province before Jerusalem fell.

Because historical resources for the period between the fall of Jerusalem and the demise of Babylonian rule are limited to descriptions of the conditions immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem and descriptions of the conditions at the outset of Persian rule, Lipschits is forced to write his history based on a comparison of these two descriptions. Drawing mainly on the biographical material in the latter half of Jeremiah and descriptions in 2 Kings, Lipschits describes the tenure of Gedaliah as the new governor and Babylonian management of the new provincial structure, especially in bolstering the status of Mizpah as the new capital. For Lipschits the death of Gedaliah did not bring an end to Judah's status as a Babylonian province, nor a significant depletion in the population of the province. Turning to the description at the outset of the Persian period, Lipschits sees no evidence in Ezra 1–6 for a change in the political status of Judah as a province, arguing that the appointment of Gedaliah after the fall of Jerusalem and the appointment of governors at the outset of the Persian period suggest that "there is nothing to contravene the idea that Judean governors continued to serve in Judah throughout the sixth century" (125).

After establishing the basic historical contours of the Babylonian period in Judah, Lipschits devotes chapter 3 to an analysis of the geopolitical boundaries of Judah during the Babylonian period. By comparing the textual and material evidence for the boundaries at the outset of the Babylonian period (Josiah's reign) with evidence after the Persian period (Hellenistic), Lipschits demonstrates that the main contrast is found in the loss of the southern and southwestern sections of Judah to Idumea. Having established the shape of the province at the two chronological extremes, Lipschits then evaluates the biblical and archaeological data from the periods of Babylonian (3.3) and Persian (3.4) rule. Material (*mwsh* seal impressions, archaeological evidence) and literary evidence reveal that Benjamin and the northern Judean hills with Mizpah as the administrative centre were central to the Babylonian province of Judah. The archaeological evidence shows that Benjamin and

Bethlehem suffered less damage and the *mwšh* seal impressions represent pottery vessels from a crown estate, which supplied agricultural products to the new provincial seat at Mizpah (71% of these impressions were found at Mizpah, with 10% only at Jerusalem). A comparison of the lists in Ezra-Nehemiah with the material evidence reveals a lack of correlation in the data relating to Jerusalem and its environs, a lack that can be attributed to the literary purposes of the author/editor who recorded the lists. Beyond this, however, the lists and material evidence highlight the importance of Benjamin during the Persian period and the material evidence the importance of the Judean hills and northern Shephelah. Furthermore, the dominance of Jerusalem (41.3%) and Ramet-Raḥel (47.1%) in the distribution of *yhw*d stamp impressions and the relative lack of evidence of these impressions at Mizpah (4.6%) reflects the renewed importance of Jerusalem and Ramet-Raḥel as provincial administrative centres during the Persian period. A comparison of the Babylonian and Persian periods reveals a clear shift in settlement patterns from Benjamin/Mizpah to Jerusalem.

In chapter 4 Lipschits focuses on the material evidence of the Babylonian period, first reviewing the archaeological evidence of the Babylonian destruction and then comparing this to the evidence from the period after the destruction. Through this he seeks to establish trends in demography and settlement throughout the Babylonian period. He concludes that the Babylonian campaign resulted in the complete destruction and depopulation of Jerusalem and its immediate environs as well as the Shephelah and its forts, while areas to the south and east of the kingdom declined through a longer process. In contrast, the regions of Benjamin, the northern highlands of Judah and the region of Bethlehem were spared destruction by the Babylonians. Estimating demography based on a comparison of settlement at the end of the Iron Age with settlement in the Persian period reveals all regions experienced decreases in population in the 70-90% range (with Jerusalem leading the pack at 89%), except for Benjamin and the Northern Judean hills which experienced a decrease of 56.5% and 2% respectively. This evidence highlights the devastating impact of the Babylonian invasion on the kingdom/province as a whole, the severe treatment of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and the key role played by the region of Benjamin/northern Judah throughout the Babylonian period. Lipschits estimates that the population of the kingdom of Judah as it came to an end was approximately 110,000, while the population of the Persian province was approximately 30,000. In light of this evidence Lipschits estimates the population of the Babylonian province as 40,000.

Since Lipschits concludes chapter four by highlighting the implications of his research for the reconstruction of the history of Judah in the 7th-5th Centuries B.C.E., it is not surprising that he adds a fifth chapter in order to consider perceptions and trends in biblical historiography. Here he compares and contrasts various literary corpora and redactional levels within 2 Kings and Jeremiah in order to trace diversity of perspective and a typology of development in the historiography of the Babylonian and early Persian periods.

In this volume Lipschits has provided a superb resource for the study of

the Babylonian period in Judah. He has collected in one place much of the key material evidence that is presently available for the study of this period and brought this into conversation with some of the key biblical texts. It is a helpful resource for anyone studying texts and reconstructing the final phase of the kingdom of Judah, the post-fall of Jerusalem period as well as the early Persian period. Lipschits is masterful at explaining the history of the period at the outset, setting up the period under discussion in an accessible yet accurate way. I found his work on Mizpah and the background of Gedaliah and his family especially helpful, providing a key historical and social context not only for the community living in Judah during the post-fall of Jerusalem period, but also for the emergence of key Benjamin and Saulide traditions in the Hebrew Bible. The author was wise to highlight his core argument at the outset of each chapter and provide summary comments at the end. The many charts and maps present the data in vivid ways that help the reader see the impact of the evidence on the historical reconstruction.

There will, of course, be arguments over details in a work with such extensive and intricate data, not only because of the analytical character of this discipline, but also because of new discoveries. Some might quibble with Lipschits' dismissal of early development of the Edomite kingdom (1.2.), especially in light of the recent work of Thomas Levy and Russell Adams who push this date back to the 10th Century B.C.E. Others will be unconvinced by Lipschits' use of references to "governors" in the early Persian period as evidence for continuity between the Babylonian and Persian periods (2.2.3-4), not only because the source in Ezra 1-6 is dated to a later era, but also because political terms such as those used for governor cannot be firmly linked to a single geopolitical entity.

Key to historical work is not only the evaluation of the worth of each piece of data, but also the connection between the data and the development of a cogent argument. In this work Lipschits proves himself adept at weighing the data and incorporating it into his historical analysis as he develops a clear argument. Nevertheless, it would have been nice, especially in a book that concludes with a consideration of the historiographic method of biblical writers, for Lipschits to provide a clear articulation of his own historiography at the outset. At several points in the book and especially in chapter 5, it is clear that he recognizes the importance of evaluating literary sources before utilizing them for historical reconstruction. He does offer evaluation of some of the biblical sources before using them as the book progresses, for instance, the reliability of the decree of Cyrus in Ezra 1 (2.3.6) and the lists in Ezra-Nehemiah (3.4.1.), as well as the Josianic provenance of the lists in Joshua (3.1). However, what is interesting is that he begins the book by constructing an extensive history of Judah within the ancient Near East based heavily on the books of Jeremiah and 2 Kings, whose usefulness for such reconstruction has not been presented at the outset and, according to Lipschits' analysis in chapter 5, must be approached carefully because of varying historiographic perspectives (although see his passing comment and cross reference on 119, note 289). As the book progresses Lipschits does provide brief insights into his historiography, even making the statement that he wants to construct a historical account independent of the Bible ("The possibility of formulating an independent historical picture that does not depend on the Bible and is as

unfettered as possible by prior historiographical and theological perceptions is a privilege of modern research and is of prime importance even for an examination of the biblical descriptions themselves", 258). However, it is clear that this is nearly impossible since the general contours of the historical period are formed by heavy reliance on the biblical text in the first place. His constant use of the biblical texts shows how difficult it is to write the history of Judah without one's entire work being consumed by long discussions of source and redaction criticism. In light of that I applaud the courage of Lipschits to provide what will become unquestionably the new reference and standard for understanding and discussing Jewish history in this shadowy age.

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Cecilia WASSEN, *Women in the Damascus Document* (Academia Biblica 21). Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2005. Xv+327 p. 15 × 23. \$42.95.

The spectacular finds of the Dead Sea Scrolls in caves near an enigmatic settlement on the shores of the Dead Sea has tended to create, in the popular imagination at least, a tendency to equate the religious group associated with the sectarian scrolls with the people who lived at the settlement. Even among scholars there is a tendency to talk about the group simply as "the Qumran community", as though location and religious identity were virtually co-terminus. Yet from the first stages of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship the identification of the sectarian community with the Essenes (an identification I consider basically correct) has underscored the fact that the settlement at Qumran was only a part (and numerically a relatively minor part) of a much larger and widespread religious community. While both archaeological and textual evidence suggests that few if any women were associated with the settlement at Qumran, textual evidence makes amply clear that women were a part of the larger movement. In *Women in the Damascus Document*, a dissertation written under the supervision of Dr. Eileen Schuller at McMaster University, Cecilia Wassen undertakes to examine what can be learned about women in this religious movement from the evidence provided in the Damascus Document, both viewed on its own terms and in relation to other relevant texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Wassen's book begins with an introduction, locating her study in relation to previous scholarship and giving a quick review of contested issues. She also assumes as correct the identification of the community responsible for the scrolls with the Essenes and understands marriage to have been the norm in Essene life, reviewing but not deciding among the theories advanced to account for the largely male settlement at Qumran (5-9). While a number of short studies have attempted to survey references to women in the Dead Sea scrolls, Wassen's study both provides a systematic and in-depth study of a particular community rule (the Damascus Document) and attempts in certain

instances to move behind the text to reconstruct the nature of women's role and status in the community. Wassen identifies her methodology as "socio-historical", that is, based first of all on historical-critical exegetical methods (particularly source and redaction criticism) but also informed by feminist criticism with its hermeneutic of suspicion both concerning the textual sources themselves and the unstated assumptions of scholarship on the texts (13-15).

Exegetical work on the Damascus Document is a difficult enterprise, given the complexity of the textual evidence. In her second chapter, "The Damascus Document", Wassen reviews the state of scholarship on the Cairo Geniza and Cave 4 manuscripts, as they shed light on the date and function of the Damascus Document. She considers as likely that the Damascus Document "was read as a sermon at the annual [Covenant Renewal] Festival" (27), though she leaves unresolved the question of the relation between the Damascus Document and the Serek ha-Yahad. The more important issue for her study is that of the redactional history of the Damascus Document. After reviewing the work of Philip Davies on the Admonition (*Damascus Covenant. An Interpretation of the "Damascus Document"* [JSOTSup 25; Sheffield 1983]) and of Robert Davis (*The History of the Composition of the 'Damascus Document'* [Ph.D. diss. Harvard University 1992]) and Charlotte Hempel (*The Laws of the Damascus Document. Sources, Tradition, and Redaction* [STDJ 29; Leiden 1998]) on the laws, Wassen opts for a simplified redactional model, distinguishing "between two main literary strata — an early law code and later communal laws", associating the Admonition with the communal layer of laws (42-43). While it is possible that future analysis of the development of the Damascus Document could call in question some of Wassen's conclusions about the status of women in different historical periods of the sect's development, her stance on the redactional history is a judicious one.

In chapter 3, "The Early Law Code", Wassen surveys laws concerning women in the earliest, pre-sectarian stratum of the Damascus Document. The topics concern (1) *zavah*, *niddah*, and childbirth; (2) the rite of the *sotah* and intercourse with a slave woman; (3) various laws concerning marital arrangements; (4) women's oaths; (5) the Sabbath code; and (6) laws against sexual intercourse in "the city of the sanctuary". One of the problems besetting analysis of these texts, however, is that many of them preserved only in the texts from Cave 4 are fragmentary or lacking context. Thus conclusions must often be based on reasonable guesses rather than certainty. Nevertheless, some general tendencies emerge. The laws tend to be based on biblical *halakah* but to harmonize, to extend application by analogy, and to be more stringent than biblical law. In some cases (e.g., the law of the *sotah* or laws concerning oaths) these changes either offer women additional protections or self-determination (64-66, 92-93), though others appear to attempt to exert additional controls on the sexuality of women (80-81).

The short chapter 4 on "The Catalogue of Transgressors" concerns texts that are extremely fragmentary and that offer difficult exegetical problems, and Wassen's analysis does not go significantly beyond previous discussion. More important is chapter 5, "The Admonition". Here, too, exegetical difficulties abound, and Wassen's analyses are unlikely to put an end to

divergent views. While she plausibly argues that “marrying two women in their (masc.) lives” (CD IV,21) refers to polygyny, not remarriage after divorce, her conclusion that the accusation concerning those who sleep with women experiencing vaginal blood flow is aimed at “marriage or illicit sexual intercourse between Jews and non-Jews” is weakly argued (“It is hard to believe that transgressions of these purity laws were widespread among the people”, 119). More persuasive, and more significant, is her argument that the difficult passage CD VII, 4B-10A does not concern the contrast between a celibate and married way of life but rather is an admonition that the entire family, including women and children, obey the laws and community regulations (122-128). This text plays an important role in Wassen’s argument that women were considered to be full members of the community.

Chapter 6, “Communal Laws”, examines the laws that come from the sectarian phase of the community’s existence. The topics investigated include (1) the initiation process and excluded categories; (2) marriage, divorce, and the education of children; (3) aspects of the penal code, namely fornication with a wife and the differential status of “the fathers” and “the mothers”. The issues of most significance are the first and the last. Wassen makes a compelling argument that, in contrast to the War Scroll, where women are explicitly excluded from the camp, women are not excluded from the council either in 1QSa or the Damascus Document. More contestable, however, is her argument that in the description of the initiation ceremony in CD XV *benehem* should be understood to include both boys and girls, rather than just boys. Her strongest arguments rest on the analogy of the ceremony with the explicitly inclusive covenant ceremonies in Deuteronomy 29,10-11 and Nehemiah 10,28-29, which explicitly include women and children in the covenant oath taking. But the absence of similar explicitness in CD makes the issue as to the intent of the Damascus Document debatable. At the very least, however, Wassen’s discussion reveals the extent to which much previous scholarly discussion has rested on assumptions about the marginal place of women in the community rather than on a rigorous analysis of the evidence. The fact that girls as well as boys were apparently educated within the community (164-167) lends indirect support to her argument that women were formal members.

One of the most intriguing and ingenious discussions of a difficult text concerns the differential treatment of “the fathers” and “the mothers” (i.e., male and female Elders) in the penal code. Complaining against the Fathers is punished with expulsion with no return, whereas complaining against the Mothers merits only ten days of penalty, “because the Mothers have no *rwqmh* in the midst of [the congregation]” (4Q270 7 I 13-14). Reviewing various interpretations of this difficult passage, Wassen cleverly and persuasively argues that *rwqmh* (“embroidery”) refers to “special clothing, or part of clothing with a special design, that would mark the particular status of the Fathers in the community” (193). Thus the offense against the fathers would be of a great severity because it would also be an offense against this symbol of community authority. Although the Mothers do not bear such a symbol, they are nevertheless publicly recognized as having special status within the community.

The other significant argument of this chapter is that the sectarian

regulation of marriage and divorce (156-164) and the role of the woman in testifying concerning her husband (presumably in matters of sexual practice, 173-184) indicate a sectarian social organization in which the sect rather than the patriarchal family becomes the primary social unit. This conclusion would be in keeping with what social scientific study has frequently identified in other sectarian religious movements.

Wassen summarizes her conclusions about the nature of women's role and status within the sectarian community of the Damascus Document in a passage that deserves to be quoted:

[A] typical woman in the community behind D would receive an education and, at adulthood, would formally enter into the community by taking an oath, thereby obtaining full membership. Moreover, she would be able to attend communal meetings, presuming that she was ritually pure and unblemished. She would marry — with the permission of the Examiner — and have children. As a wife, she would ensure that no sexual intercourse took place during her menstrual periods nor during the nine months of pregnancy. She would be expected to report any transgression of laws that her husband might commit, including serious offenses that would lead to his expulsion (204).

While not everyone will agree with the exegesis that leads to each of these conclusions, Wassen has made a strong case for the portrait of sectarian womanhood that she draws here. Her study of women in the Damascus Document will be the necessary starting point for any further study of women in the Essene movement and represents a substantial contribution to the study of women in Jewish antiquity.

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